

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn | شيخ محمد بن صالح العثيمين

Tafsīr on Selected Sūrahs

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سورة التين
التين
والزيتون
والجبل
المرسي

Sūrah al-Ṭāriq: 86

Verses 1-10

The opening formula, *basmalah*, has already been discussed.

By heaven and the night-star! Allah Almighty has inaugurated the *sūrah* with an oath. Allah has sworn by the heavens and the night-star (*al-ṭāriq*). Some people find it difficult to appreciate how can Allah Almighty swear an oath by the created things while swearing an oath by the created things is polytheism? This question is based on the following statement of the Prophet [pbuh]: “He who swears by anyone or anything other than Allah, indeed commits an act of Kufr or Shirk.”[1]The Prophet [pbuh] also said: “Whoever has to take an oath should swear by Allah or remain silent.”[2] This shows that swearing an oath by other than Allah including the Prophets, angels, Ka‘bah, one’s country or anything among the creations of Allah is not allowable.

A respond to this question is this. Allah Almighty has the right to swear by anything of His creations as He wills. When He swears by some of His created things it shows the greatness of Allah Almighty Himself. Exalting a thing necessarily implies exalting its creator. The Almighty Allah has sworn by many of His creations. The best discussion on this issue in my knowledge has been offered in *al-Tibyān fī Aqsām al-Qur’ān* by Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah shower mercy upon him. It is a work of great benefit to the student of the Qur’an. In this context the Almighty Allah has sworn by *al-samā’*. *al-Samā’* refers to anything that is above and higher. Thus everything that is above you can be called *samā’*. The clouds from which showers descend are also called *samā’*. Allah Almighty says: “He sends down out of heaven water, and the wadis flow each in its measure.” (Q 13:17). Since the word applies to everything that is above you its signification includes everything falling between the heavens and the earth. It also covers all the heavens because all of these are above you.

His words “*wa al-ṭāriq*, (and by **the night-star**)”, contain the second oath. Allah Almighty swears an oath by *al-ṭāriq*. What is *al-ṭāriq*? It does not mean the person who comes to his family late at night. Rather Allah Almighty has Himself explained the term by saying: “*al-najm al-thāqib*.” So this is the *ṭāriq* referred to in the previous verse. The word *najm* in this context can be a generic term referring to all the stars. In this sense the definitive AL would be signifying genre. It is also possible that “*al-najm al-thāqib*” means: the shining star with strong illumination. It is called so because it removes the darkness by its light. In each case these stars are the signs of Allah Almighty and His perfect power reflected in the journey of the starts, their management

and their different forms and benefits. Allah Almighty says: “and waymarks; and by the stars they are guided.”(Q 16:16) Allah also says: “And We adorned the lower heaven with lamps, and made them things to stone Satans.” (Q 67:5) This shows that the stars are embellishment of the heavens, things to pelt Satans with, and signs to be used as guideposts.

The Almighty Allah has then explained the *muq̣sam ‘alayhi* (the sworn fact) by saying: “**Over every soul (in kullu nafsin) there is a watcher (lammā ‘lay hā ḥāfiz).**” The particle “IN” in the beginning of the sentence is used for negation (*nāfiyah*). It means: Not every soul. The particle *lammā* signifies *illā* (literally except that, but). The literal implication is: “Not a soul is there but has a watcher appointed by Allah over it.” Elsewhere Allah Almighty has also explained the importance of these watchers by saying: “There are over you watchers noble, writers who know whatever you do.” (Q 82:10-12) These watchers record and preserve the human deeds, his obligations and rights. The man will find it on the Last Day in the form of a complete open book. It will be said to him: “Read your book! Your soul suffices you this day as a reckoner against you.” (Q 17:14) These watchers record in writing what a man does or says including his apparent sayings expressed by his tongue and doings done with the body parts or the ones hidden for example one’s belief in the heart. All these things are recorded for him. Allah Almighty says: “We indeed created man; and We know what his soul whispers within him, and We are nearer to him than the jugular vein. When the two angels meet together, sitting one on the right, and one on the left, not a word he utters, but by him is an observer ready.” (Q 50:16-18). This watcher records the deeds of the sons of Adam. There are other watchers as well which the Qur’an mentions in the following verse: “He has attendant angels, before him and behind him, watching over him by God's command.” (Q 13:11)

So let man consider (falyanzur al-insān) of what he was created. The particle L before the verb *yanzur* is the L of requisition, *al-lām al-‘amr*. The *naẓr* implied in the verb does not refer to seeing with eyes. Rather it implies insight. The implication is: Man should think over and ponder over of what he has been created. Has he been created of iron? Has he been created of steel? Has he been created of a hard substance? The correct answer to all these types of questions would be that “he was created of gushing water.” It is the semen of man. Elsewhere the Qur’an has described it as *mā’in mahīn*, a mean water with less flow. It is not like ordinary water which flows freely. At another place Allah has described this water as a drop, *nuṭfah*, which is a very small quantity of water. This is what of which man has been created. How strange is that a man created out of mean water develops into a being whose heart is hard like stone? May Allah save us! The only exception are those whose hearts are softened by Allah for His religion.

Subsequently Allah Almighty explains that this gushing water “**issues between the loins and the breast-bones.**” The part of man between loins and the breast-bones is the upper part of his heart. This leads to the fact that this is the part which is the origin of this water. It flows from a firm place in the body. Some scholars have held that the water flows from the loins of the man and the breast-bones of the woman. This however goes clearly against the words of the Qur’an. The sound interpretation is that it flows from between the loins and the breast-bones of a man. This we can because Allah Almighty has described that way.

Then Allah Almighty says: “**Surely He is able to bring him back.**” *innahū*, that is, indeed Allah Almighty has the power to bring the man back (to life). This will happen on the last Day as Allah says: “**Upon the day when the secrets are tried.**” Thus the Being who has the power to create man out of this mean gushing water can also bring him back to life on the Last Day. This argumentation involves using the sensory experience to prove a rational and intellectual reality. This is called *qiyās ‘aqlī*, rational analogy. A man can reason using his mind and say for example: When Allah has the power to create man out of this mean water and give him life he must also be powerful enough to repeat the same process. Allah says: “He who originates creation, then brings it back again, and it is very easy for Him.”(Q 30:27) This is why Allah Almighty has argued for resurrection on the basis of initiation of creation process because it is a clear and palpable analogy. A man’s mind is led from the proposition to the conclusion immediately and without effort.

His words: “**The day when the *sarā’ir* are tried.**” The *sarā’ir* will be tested. This refers to the hearts. The accountability on the Last Day will be based on the content of the hearts. The accountability in the world is always based on the external deeds done by the body parts. This is why the Prophet [pbuh] dealt with the hypocrites like Muslims. The Prophet [pbuh] would at times be approached by the Companions who asked him to allow killing the hypocrites. The Prophet [pbuh] would respond: “No. (Don’t kill them). The people will say that Muhammad kills his companions.”[3] Thus he would not kill the hypocrites while he knew that there were individuals who were hypocrites. Therefore, the worldly matters are dealt with according to the apparent conditions revealed through one’s body. Conversely, on the Last Day the matter will be based on the internal self. “**The day when the *sarā’ir* are tried.**” That is, they will be judged. This is just like the following saying of Allah Almighty: “Knows he not that when that which is in the tombs is overthrown, and that which is in the breasts is brought out.” (Q 100:9-10)

Therefore, we are obliged to consider and assess the deeds of the heart and mind more than we need to be careful about our physical deeds. The physical deeds are apparent signs. The heart on the contrary is the foundation upon which the external deeds rest. This is why the Prophet [pbuh] informed the Companions [rta] about the Kharijites saying: “Anyone of you would regard his own prayer and fasting as insignificant when compared to theirs.” That is, they will strive hard in the apparent physical religious deeds while their hearts would be empty (of faith). May Allah save us! “Islam will not go beyond their throats and they will go out of Islam as an arrow goes out through the game.”[4] Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: “By God, even Abū Bakr [rta] could not outrace them inṣalāḥ and fasts. He only surpassed them in the faith that was firm in his heart.” When faith gains firm footing in one’s heart it leads him to action. However, the mere action does not lead one to the reformation of his heart. Therefore, we should remain concerned about our heart, its actions, its beliefs, its tendencies, its reformation and its purity from polytheism, innovations, enmity, jealousy, dislike for what Allah revealed upon His Messenger and dislike for the Companions [rta]. One must also keep it pure of other things from which our heart must be cleared.

Then the Almighty said: “**He shall have no strength.**” That is, on the Last Day man will not have personal power. “**No helper.**” This is external power. Neither will man himself have any power to defend himself nor would anyone else be able to save him. Allah Almighty says: “For when the Trumpet is blown, that day there shall be no kinship any more between them, neither will they question one another.” (Q 23:101) In this world people seek help from one another. They protect each other. However, on the Last Day no relation and nearness will remain. Relations will not help. Nor will people ask for help from one another.

Verses 11:17

After a mention of the oaths “by the heavens and night star” till his saying “the day when the secrets are tried and he shall have no strength, no helper,” Allah says: “**By heaven of the returning rain, by earth splitting with verdure.**” This is the second oath sworn by the heavens. The first such oath is in the beginning of the *sūrah*. There Almighty says: “**By heaven and the night-star! And what shall teach you what is the night-star? The piercing star!**” Here He says: “**By heaven of the returning rain, by earth splitting with verdure, surely it is a decisive word.**” The two oaths are interconnected, God knows best. The first one alludes to the *ṭāriq*, which is a star. Stars are the things with which the Satans are pelted when they try to eavesdrop. This pelting of the satans is done in order to secure the Book of God Almighty. This oath, sworn by “the heaven of the returning rain,” affirms that the Qur’an is a decisive

word. Thus here He swore that the Qur'an is a decisive word. Thus the two oaths are interconnected as in the first one an allusion has been made to that the Qur'an is being protected during its revelation and in the second oath there is allusion to that this Qur'an is life.

It has been said: **“By heaven of the returning rain (*dhāt al-raj'*).”** The word *raj'* signifies rain. It has been called *raj'* (literally repetition) as it repeatedly falls. It is a known fact that rain is the source of life on the earth. **“And by earth splitting with verdure (*dhāt al-ṣad'*).”** *ṣad'* means: splitting. The implication is that the vegetation splits through the earth. Thus Allah swears and oath by the rain that is the cause of sprouting out of the vegetation. It is through splitting of the earth that it comes out. All this alludes to the life of the earth after it has been dead. The Qur'an is life for the hearts after their death. Allah Almighty says: “Even so We have revealed to thee a Spirit of Our bidding.” (Q 42:52). The Almighty called the Qur'an *rūḥ*, spirit, because the hearts find life through it.

Allah Almighty says: **“By heaven of the returning rain (*dhāt al-raj'*),”** that is, the one giving rain, **“And by earth splitting with verdure (*dhāt al-ṣad'*),”** that is, the one splitting up as the vegetation sprouts out of it, “surely it” that is, the Qur'an, “is a decisive word.” Allah has described the Qur'an as a decisive word because it is the word of God. It is Allah who has spoken it and gave it to Jibrīl who revealed it on the heart of the Messenger [pbuh]. The Almighty has at times termed the Qur'an as the statement of Jibrīl and also as the speech of the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. Concerning Jibrīl Allah Almighty says: “Truly this is the word of a noble Messenger having power, with the Lord of the Throne secure, obeyed, moreover trusty.” (Q 81:19-21) While ascribing it to the Prophet [pbuh] Allah says: “It is the speech of a noble Messenger. It is not the speech of a poet. Little do you believe.” (Q 69:40-1). In the first group of verses the Almighty ascribed the Qur'an to Jibrīl [pbuh] because he communicated it to the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. In the second instance He has ascribed it to the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] because he communicated it to the people of the world. Otherwise, the original speaker of the Qur'an is the Almighty Allah Himself.

“It is a decisive word” which distinguishes between the truth and the falsehood, differentiates between the God-fearing men and the transgressors. Rather it issues a decisive verdict against those who reject and oppose it. This is why we see that when the Muslims were fighting against the disbelievers through the Qur'an they were always victorious over those criminals. They cut their power. The Qur'an judged between them. When the Muslims put the Qur'an behind their backs they were defeated and were put in disgrace in direct proportion to their distance from the Qur'an. When a man runs away from the

Qur'an honour flees him accordingly. Divine help also departs him till he returns to the Book of Allah Almighty.

“It is no merriment.” That is, it is not a mere play, useless and meaningless thing. Rather it is the truth. All its words and letters are true. Its news is true. Its commands are just. To recite it earns reward. Even if a man continues reciting it all the time he would not get bored. If he recites it while pondering over it Allah opens up the meaning of the text which he never has had before. This is a fact that is demonstrable. Read the Qur'an and ponder over it. As you read and ponder over it you continue gaining meanings that you never had before. All this is because it is a decisive word and is not a meaningless thing. If you repeat the absurd speech of humans you would dislike it and get bored of it. As for the Book of God this is not the case.

“They are devising guile.” That is, the disbelievers who reject the Messenger [pbuh] “devise guile”, a great guile. They devise schemes against the Messenger of Allah. They also scheme against the people who followed the Prophet [pbuh]. Consider their treatment of the believers when they were in Makkah. They would persecute them and give them great pain and punishment. Muslims had to migrate to Abyssinia twice. Then they had to migrate to Madinah. All these migrations were done in order to save the religion from these criminals who never left any punishment and pain untried. Their gravest crime was that before the migration the leaders of the tribe gathered together and jointly discussed how to do away with Muhammad [pbuh]. Any opinion forwarded was rejected. They would turn it down as unworkable. According to the historians this continued till Satan came to them in the form of a man and said to them: I believe you should select ten young men from different tribes and give each one of them a sword and they should assassinate the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. They should do it jointly the way a single man kills a single man. If they do so the blood would be distributed among the tribes. The tribe of Banū Hāshim would not be able to retaliate against all the tribes. They will then have to opt for *diyyah*, blood money.

This was exactly what the disbelievers wanted. They all agreed on that it was a good approach. It was put into practice and ten young men from different tribes stood outside the house in which the Prophet [pbuh]. They were waiting in ambush for him intending to assassinate him. The Prophet [pbuh] however went out of the door and they were still watching and waiting for him but they could not see him. History[5] tells us that the Prophet [pbuh] threw dust upon their heads in order to disgrace them. While doing so he recited the following words of the Almighty Allah: “We have put before them a barrier

and behind them a barrier; and We have covered them, so they do not see.” (Q 36:9) You should not find it strange how the Prophet [pbuh] could come out while they could not see him. Don’t find it strange. Don’t you see that these were the Quraysh who approached the foot of the cave in which the Prophet [pbuh] was hiding on his way to Madinah. He remained there three days so that the search mission of the Quraysh subsides. The Quraysh were out to look for him and find him. They declared that the person who gets hold of Muhammad [pbuh] would be given in prize one hundred camels. This was a great reward. However, they came upon the cave in which the Prophet [pbuh] and Abū Bakr [rta] were hiding and stood at its opening.

We all know that the cave’s mouth was open. Anyone in the cave would be discovered. But the Quraysh could not see the Prophet [pbuh]. Nor could they spot Abū Bakr [rta]. Abu Bakr [rta] said: “O Messenger of Allah, if anyone among them looks towards his feet he would see us.” The Prophet [pbuh] replied: “Don’t fear. Allah is with us. What do you think of two, the third of whom is Allah?”[6] Thus Abū Bakr [rta] became satisfied. So this group which stood on the opening of the cave was not deficient in hearing. Nor was their eyesight defective. Nor was there any problem in their understanding. But Allah Almighty blinded their eyes and they became unable to see the Prophet [pbuh] and his companion. So you must not feel it improbable that the Prophet [pbuh] went out of the house without being noticed by these ten men as said by the historians. He continued spraying dust on their head and saying: “We have put before them a barrier and behind them a barrier; and We have covered them, so they do not see.” (Q 36:9) Allah Almighty says in *Sūrah al-Infāl*: “And when the unbelievers were devising against you, to confine you, or slay you, or to expel you, and were devising, and God was devising; and God is the best of devisers. (Q 8:30)

“They are devising guile and I am devising guile.” Then the Almighty Allah says: **“So respite the unbelievers; delay with them awhile (*ruwaydā*).”** The verbs *mahhala* and *amhala* give the same meaning: respite the disbelievers. Don’t give them a long respite. *Ruwaydā* means: a little. The word *ruwaydā* is a diminutive form of the word *rawd* or *irwād*. It means ‘a little’. This verse contains a stern warning for the Quraysh and a reassurance to the Prophet [pbuh] whom Allah gives a glad tiding of help and succour. The reality turned out exactly as Allah Almighty had told the Prophet [pbuh]. The Prophet [pbuh] left his town as an emigrant. Battles were fought between the Prophet [pbuh] and the Quraysh. In the second year of his migration twenty four of the major leaders, elders and prominent men of the Quraysh were killed. This number included their leader Abū Jahl. Within eight years of migration the Prophet [pbuh] entered Makkah as conqueror, successful and helped by God. According to historical accounts the Prophet [pbuh] was standing besides the

pillars of the Ka 'bah and the Quraysh were under him when he said: "What do you think I am going to do with you?" This he said because their fate was now in his hand.

"What do you think I am going to do with you?" They said: "You are a noble brother and a son of a noble brother." The Prophet [pbuh] said: "I say to you what the Prophet Joseph [pbuh] said to his brothers: 'No reproach this day shall be on you; God will forgive you; He is the most merciful of the merciful.' Go you are free." [7] The Prophet [pbuh] did a generous favour upon them because they submitted. Allah Almighty has said: "Say to the unbelievers, if they give over He will forgive them what is past." (Q 8:38)

We beseech Allah to make us among those who recite the Book of Allah the way it should be recited, to make us benefit from it, and make the Book intercede for us on the Last Day. Indeed He has power over everything. May Allah bless our Prophet Muhammad [pbuh], his family and Companions, all of them.

[1] Reference of this report has already passed. See page: 125.

[2] Reference of this report has already passed. See page: 125.

[3] Şaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2518, Book of Virtues and Merits of the Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions, Chapter: What is forbidden of the Da'wah of the Period of Ignorance.

[4] Şaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 7432, Book of Tawḥīd, Chapter: he angels and the Ruh ascend to Him..."; Şaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1063/142, Book of Zakāh, Chapter: Mention of Khawārij and their Characteristics.

[5] See al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah by Ibn Kathīr, 4:144.

[6] Şaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 3653, Book of Virtues and Merits of the Companions, Chapter: The virtues of the emigrants (i.e., Muhajirin); Şaḥīḥ of Muslim, No:3381/1, Book of Virtues of the Companions, Chapter: Virtues of Abu Bak Şiddīque [rta].

[7] See Zād al-Ma'ād by Ibn al-Qayyim.

Sūrah al-A‘lā: 87

Verses 1-13

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The opening formula, *basmalah*, has already been discussed. It has been explained that it is an independent verse not forming part of Surah al-Fātiḥah, al-Baqarah, āl-‘Imran or any other surah of the Qur’an. Rather it is an independent verse prefacing every Surah except for Surah Barā‘ah.

Magnify the Name of thy Lord the Most High. This verse addresses the Prophet [pbuh]. The Qur’an addresses the Prophet [pbuh] in three different ways:

First, there is a clear indication to the fact that it is specifically related to the Prophet [pbuh]. Such a divine command is particular and exclusively related to him (and is not extended to other believers).

Secondly, there is a textual indication to the statement being general and thus it is taken to be generally applicable to all.

Thirdly, there is no such indication to specification or generalization. Such a command is taken to be specifically related to the Prophet [pbuh] in expression but applies generally to all the believers in its implication and effect.

An example of the first kind is the following saying of Allah Almighty: “Did We not expand your breast for you and lift from you your burden,” (Q 94:1-2) Another such example is the verse: “And We have sent thee to men a Messenger” (Q 4:79) It is known that this is specific to the Prophet [pbuh].

The example of the second kind of address to the Prophet [pbuh] with clear indication to that it is general is the following saying of Almighty Allah: “Prophet, when you divorce women, divorce them when they have reached their period.” (Q 65:1) Thus the Almighty directed the address to the Messenger in the beginning of the sentence saying: “O Prophet.” He did not use the words “Believers, when you divorce women.” Rather he said: “Prophet, when you divorce (*ṭallaqtum*, second person plural) women.” Besides he has not said: “Prophet, when you divorce (second person singular, *ṭallaqta*) women.” So He said: “Prophet, when you divorce women.” This proves that

the address directed to the Prophet [pbuh] implies to him and the *ummah* as a whole.

There are many examples of the third kind where the address apparently is directed to the Prophet [pbuh] but in reality and legal effect it applies to all.

In the verses under discussion, Allah says: “**Magnify (*sabbiḥ*) the Name of thy Lord the Most High.**” *Sabbiḥ*, that is, declare that Allah is pure of anything that does not match with His greatness and exaltedness. *Tasbiḥ istanzīh* expressed in your saying: *Subhān Allah* meaning, I declare that Allah is pure of every evil, every blemish, and every shortcoming. This is why one of the attributive names of Allah is *al-salām*, *al-quddūs* because He is pure of every blemish. I will give a few more examples from the attributes of Allah. One of the attributes of Allah is life. But the life He has is free of any aspect of shortcoming. Contrarily, life of the created things suffers from shortcomings. First, it follows the non-existent. Man is not an eternal creature. Second, it is subject to destruction. “Everyone on the earth is ephemeral.” (Q 55:26)

Another example is His hearing. His hearing is perfect. He hears everything. He could even hear the complaint of the woman who had come to the Prophet [pbuh] and whose story has been mentioned in surah al-Mujādilah. This woman and the Prophet [pbuh] discussed the matter while Aishah [rta] was also in the apartment. She did not hear some part of the woman’s statements. But Allah says in His book: “God has heard the words of her that disputes with thee concerning her husband, and makes complaint unto God.” (Q 58:1) Concerning the same fact Aishah [rta] said: “All praise is due to the One whose hearing extends beyond and covers all the sounds.”[1] The woman was putting her complaint before the Prophet [pbuh] who was supposed to keep secret some of her statements. So the meaning of the command *sabbiḥ* is: Declare that Allah is pure of all shortcomings and flaws.

The words: “**The Name of your Lord the Most High.**” Some of the exegetes have said: The expression “Name of your Lord” signifies the Named, the signified. The glorification is done of Allah Almighty and not His name. However, the sound view is that it means: Glorify your Lord, mentioning His names. The implication is that don’t only glorify him in your heart and mind. Rather you should use heart as well as your tongue in expressing this glorification. This is done by a mention of the names of Allah. This interpretation of the expression is corroborated by the following saying of Allah: “Then magnify the Name of thy Lord, the All-mighty (*sabbiḥ bi ismi rabbika al-azīm*).” (Q 56:94) The meaning is: Magnify your Lord taking his names. This is relevant because *tasbiḥ* is at times done with the heart, through the belief in it, and is also done with one’s tongue and it can also be done with

the both of them. The intention in the verse is that Allah should be glorified with heart as well as expression through the tongue. The words of Allah: “*rabbika*”. The word *al-rab* means: the creator, the owner, the one who manages all the affairs. Thus Allah is the creator. He is the owner. He is the one who manages the entire created world. The polytheists confess that. Allah says: “If you ask them, 'Who created the heavens and the earth?' they will say, 'God.' (Q 31:25) At another occasion He says: “If you ask them who created them they will say: Allah. (Q 43:78) Allah informs us that if they are asked 'or who possesses hearing and sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living, and who directs the affairs?' They will surely say, 'God.'” (Q 10:31) This proves that the polytheists acknowledge that it is Allah who is the owner of all, it is He who runs the affairs, and it is He who has created everything. Yet they worship other than Allah. This is sheer ignorance. How is that you acknowledge that Allah alone is the creator, the owner, the manager and the runner of all affairs and you worship other things besides Him? Strange! This shows that the term *al-rabb* means: the creator, the owner and the manager of the affairs. Every man who acknowledges that is obliged to avoid worshipping anyone other than Allah as has been indicated by a number of verses. Allah says: “Worship your Lord who created you and created the people before you.” (Q 2:21) By His command: “Worship your Lord who created you” means: don’t worship any other entity.

Al-a‘lā is derived from *‘uluww*: highness. Allah is high in two ways: exaltedness of His attributes and exaltedness of His person. As for the highness of his attributes it is established by the fact that it is the most perfect attribute of Allah. Allah says: “God's is the loftiest (*al-a‘lā*) likeness.”

As for the highness in person of God it means: Allah Almighty is above His servants, established on His throne. Where does a man face when he calls Allah and says “O Allah”? Surely he turns his face towards the heavens, upwards. Thus Allah Almighty is above everything, established on His throne. Whenever you read the divine attribute “*a‘lā*” you should remind yourself that Allah is High in His attributes and High and exalted in His person. This is why when a man falls in prostration he says: “Glory to my Lord the Exalted.” By this he affirms his own lowliness. At this moment a man falls down. He puts the highest and the noblest of man’s body part, face and head, on the earth which is usually traversed with feet. Therefore, the wisdom demands that at this occasion he says: “Glory to my Lord the Exalted.” Your Lord is above everything. His attributes are the most perfect of all.

(In the next verse) Allah says: “who created and shaped (*fa sawwā*).” The verb *khalāqa* in this verse implies creating out of nothing, *ex nihilo*. The

implication is that all the creatures in the universe have been created by God. Allah Almighty says: “O men, a similitude is struck; so give you ear to it. Surely those upon whom you call, apart from God, shall never create a fly, though they banded together to do it; and if a fly should rob them of aught, they would never rescue it from him.” (Q 22:73) This is a great example. All the entities you worship other than Allah have not even created a fly even if they all work together. If all the gods which are worshipped, and all the kings and the lords, and engineers of the world unite together and take upon themselves to create a fly they would not find a way to accomplish it. This is true even in the present day when technology has advanced greatly. Even then all those challenged get together and make a combined effort to create a fly would not be able to do so. Even the people today claim they have created robots they can't create a fly. The robot is nothing but a machine. It does not feel hunger, thirst, heat, or cold. Nor does it move unless moved. A fly can't be created by anyone other than Allah. Allah Almighty alone is the creator. What does He use to create? A single command.

He says: “Truly, the likeness of Jesus, in God's sight, is as Adam's likeness; He created him of dust, and then said He unto him, 'Be,' and he was.” (Q 3:59) He also says: “His command, when He desires a thing, is to say to it 'Be,' and it is.” (Q 36:82) If He utters a single word, all the creations will die. They will be destroyed. The earth will eat them up. The animals eat some. Some are consumed by fire. But on the Last Day Allah will issue a single command to these and they will come out alive. Allah says: “But it shall be only a single scare, and behold, they are awakened.” (Q 79:13) He also says: “It was only one Cry; then behold, they are all arranged before Us.” (Q 36:53) All the creatures, humans, jinns, animals, insects and others will rise to live with a single word of Allah. This proves that Allah alone is the creator. There is none who can create along with Him. Creation is not difficult for Him. Nor is it impossible for Him. It is easy for Him and is done with a single word of His.

The divine saying *fa sawwā* means: He proportioned every creation of His in the best form and perfect balance. For example concerning man Allah says: “Lord who created you and shaped you and wrought you in symmetry and composed you after what form He would?” (Q 82:7-8) He also says: “We indeed created Man in the fairest stature.” (Q 95:4) There is none among the creatures which is more beautiful than man. His head is at the top of the body. His heart is in the chest. He is a creature of perfect body. This means the first entity that comes under the verb *fa sawwā* is proportioning of man himself. “**The Most High who created and shaped**” everything as is required by its proper proportioning.

The one Who determined (*qaddara*) and guided. Allah determined everything just as He has said in another verse: “He created everything, then He ordained it very exactly.” (Q 25:2) He ordained and determined its state, its present, its end, its person, its attributes; everything – He determined. The time given to man is limited. The states he undergoes through are limited. The bodies are limited. Everything is determined and given a determined proportion just as He says: “He created everything, then He ordained it very exactly.”

His words *fa hadā*, (He guided) includes the religious guidance as well as cosmic guidance. Cosmic guidance is that Allah guides everyone to things created for him. The Pharaoh said to Moses [pbuh]: “Who is your Lord, Moses?’ He said, ‘Our Lord is He who gave everything its creation, then guided it.’” (Q 20:49-50) You see that every creature of Allah has been guided by God to what it needs. When a baby comes out of the womb of the mother and needs to feed, Allah guides him to the breasts of the mother from where he feeds on milk. Consider the lower insects; for example, an ant. It does not build its house except on higher grounds so that the floods don’t enter its home and destroy it. When rain comes and there is food in its house and it is there, it takes the food and puts it in the sun so that it does not get rotten. Before storing a grain as food it eats up the out layer so that it does not start growing and is wasted. This is a fact that is observable and known. Who guides it to do that? It is Allah Almighty. This is a cosmic guidance. The Almighty guides every creature to know where it can find the things it needs.

As for the religious guidance it is the most important for the human beings. It is also provided by Allah Almighty. Even the disbelievers have been provided the guidance. Allah Almighty says: “As for Thamood, We guided them, but they preferred blindness above guidance.” (Q 41:17) The religious guidance is the objective of the life of the humans. Allah says: “I have not created jinn and mankind except to serve Me.” (Q 51:56) Allah has informed us of the fact so that we turn to Him in all our matters. When we know that He is the creator who created us after we were non-existent so we turn to Him when we are sick. This is imperative because He is the one who created us and created us from nothing. He is therefore, able to give our body health. Therefore, you should seek refuge with your Lord and rely on Him. There is nothing wrong with taking medicine that is allowable for you to take. However, you should believe that the medicine is a means which Allah has created for us. If we are healed with this cause it is not because of it alone but because it is Allah who gives us recovery. Allah has made this medicine a means to our recovery from illness. Had Allah willed He would make this very medicine a means of destruction for us. So when we learn that Allah is the creator we turn to Him for help in all of our needs and issues. When we learn that He is the guide we

turn to Him for guidance and follow His guidance, follow His Shari'ah so that we can win the honor Allah has promised us.

We shall make thee recite, to forget not, save what God wills; surely He knows what is spoken aloud and what is hidden. This is a promise made by God to His Messenger [pbuh]. Allah promised that He would teach the Prophet [pbuh] the Qur'an and the latter would not forget it. The Prophet [pbuh] would make haste when the angel Jibrīl would bring him the revelation. The Almighty said to him: "Move not thy tongue with it to hasten it; Ours it is to gather it, and to recite it. So, when We recite it, follow thou its recitation. Then Ours it is to explain it." (Q 75:16-9) Thus subsequently the Prophet [pbuh] would remain silent until Jibrīl would complete the recitation of the revelation. When he finished the Prophet [pbuh] would recite it. Here the Almighty says: "**We shall make thee recite, to forget not, save what God wills.**" It means: Except that what Allah wills, you forget. The matter is in the hand of Allah. "God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever He will." (Q 13:39) He also says: "And for whatever verse We abrogate or cast into oblivion, We bring a better or the like of it; know you not that God is powerful over everything? Know you not that to God belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and that you have none, apart from God neither protector nor helper?" (Q 2:106-7)

At times the Prophet [pbuh] forgot a verse from the Qur'an. However, he would immediately remember it. The words of Allah are "Indeed He knows *al-jahr*." It means: Allah knows *al-jahr*. *Al-jahr* means: What a man speaks loudly so as to be heard. "And what is hidden." That is, what remains hidden and is not expressed. But Allah knows it too as He says: "We indeed created man; and We know what his soul whispers within him." (Q 50:16) Thus He knows what is apparent and open and what is hidden.

We shall ease thee unto the Easing. This too is a promise made by God to His Prophet [pbuh]. He commits that He would ease him to the easing (*yusrā*). *Yusrā* is that his matters will be made easy for him especially the ones undertaken in obedience to Allah. The Prophet [pbuh] informed us that there is none among the people but has a place assigned for him either in the Jannah or in the Hell. So the seat of every son of Adam has been written and marked. If he is one of the people of Jannah his seat is marked in it. If he is one of the people of Hell his seat is marked there. The Companions asked: "O Messenger of Allah, should we not depend upon what has been written for us (and give up doing good deeds)?" The Messenger of Allah [pbuh] said: "No. Carry on doing good deeds. Everyone will find it easy to do such deeds (as will lead him to his destined place) for which he has been created." Thus he who is destined to be among the happy (in the Hereafter), will find it easy to do the deeds characteristic of such people, while he who is destined to be among the

miserable ones, will find it easy to do the deeds characteristic of such people. Then the Prophet [pbuh] recited the verse of the Qur'an: "As for him who gives and is god-fearing and confirms the reward, most fair, We shall surely ease him to the Easing." (Q 92:5-7).[2]

This Ḥadīth is a conclusive argument against those who disobey Allah and plead to predetermination and says: "This sin is written in my name." This is not a valid reasoning. The Prophet [pbuh] has said: "No. Carry on doing good deeds. Everyone will find it easy to do such deeds for which he has been created." Does anyone stop you and render you unable to do the good deed you intend to do? Never. Does anyone force you to commit the sin which you don't intend to commit? No! Never. Based on this we say that if someone forces you to commit a sin then you are not responsible for that. You shall not be accounted for it. The sin will not be yours. It would not lead to what an act of choice brings. Even Allah says about disbelief which is the gravest of all sins: "Whoso disbelieves in God, after he has believed -- excepting him who has been compelled, and his heart is still at rest in his belief -- but whosoever's breast is expanded in unbelief, upon them shall rest anger from God, and there awaits them a mighty chastisement." (Q 16:106) Therefore, we say: O man, do the good deeds. Do the good and avoid the evil so that Allah makes it easy for you to earn the easy (end) and save you from the hard end. The Almighty Allah promised the Messenger that He would make it easy for him to obtain the blessing. The matters will be made easy for him. This is why we see that in every problem and hardship the Prophet [pbuh] found himself that Allah had created a way out for him.

Subsequently the Almighty commands the Prophet [pbuh] to remind the people. He says: "**Therefore remind, if the Reminder profits.**" That is, remind the people. Remind them of the reality through the verses of Allah, then through a mention of His hand in Human history. Remind them if the reminder profits. It means: Remind them in contexts where the reminder works and benefits. In this sense the particle "In, (literally: if)" would imply condition. The meaning is: If the reminder benefits then remind. If it does not then don't remind. For there is no benefit in reminding a people we know would not benefit. This is what has been said concerning this verse.

Some of the scholars have said: The meaning is: Remind in every condition if the reminder is beneficial for these people. However, in this sense the condition expressed by "In (if)" is not used to mean that none should be reminded if it is not beneficial. Rather it means: Remind if the reminder works with these people. Thus according to this view the implication is: Remind in every condition. The reminder will soon benefit. It benefits the believer and the person who reminds. The person reminding others benefits definitely. As

for the people reminded if they benefit from it they will be believers. If he does not benefit from it that does not decrease or affect the reward of the person reminding. Therefore, you should continue reminding them regardless of the matter it benefits them or not.

Some other scholars say: If the person given the duty of reminding others believes that his reminder will benefit his addressee then it becomes obligatory for him to remind them. If he believes that it would not benefit his addressee then he has the choice either to remind them or not.

We however say: One must remind others even if one believes that it would help the addressee. At least it will benefit you in future. The people will also learn that the thing you warned them about is either *wājib* (obligatory) or *ḥarām* (prohibited). If you remained silent and do not remind and the people continued committing a *ḥarām* thing they will say: If it were *ḥarām* the scholars would have mentioned it as such. Or if it were *wājib* the scholars would have explained that. Therefore, one must remind others and one must propagate the Shari'ah rulings regardless of the matter anyone benefits from it or not.

Then the Almighty Allah tells us who will remember and who will not. He says: **“and he who fears shall remember, but the most wretched shall flout it.”** The Almighty explains in respect to the reminder issued the people are two parties:

First come the ones who fear Allah Almighty. He fears Him due to his knowledge that the Creator is great, powerful and exalted. This person, when reminded of the verses of His Lord, will remember as Allah has said while describing the true servants of His: “who, when they are reminded of the signs of their Lord, fall not down thereat deaf and blind.” (Q 25:73) Thus the man who fears Allah and fears Him when he is reminded of his verses definitely benefits and heeds to the lesson.

The second party: About them Allah says: “but the most wretched (*al-ashqā*) shall flout it.” That is, the wretched will flout this reminder and will not benefit from it. The word *al-ashqā* in this context is the superlative form of the adjective and is derived from *al-shiqā'* (wretchedness) which is opposite of *sa'ādah* (blessedness) as has been clarified in Surah Hūd: “As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire,” (Q 11:105) and “And as for the happy, they shall be in Paradise.” (Q 11:108) Thus the *ashqā*, characterized by wretchedness will avoid this reminder and will not benefit from it. *Al-ashqā* is the one who is at the top level of wretchedness and is a disbeliever. A disbeliever is reminded of the truth but he does not pay heed. This is why Allah says:

The one who shall roast in the Great (*kubrā*) Fire, then he shall neither die therein, nor live; the one who will roast in the Fire that has been described as *kubrā*. *Al-kubrā* Fire is the Fire of Hell. The fire in this world is lesser in extent as compared to the fire of Hell. It has been reported in sound Ḥadīth that the Prophet [pbuh] said: “The fire of the world is only one-seventieth part of the Fire of Hell.”[3] That is, the Fire of the Afterworld is sixty-nine parts in excess of (the heat of) fire in this world each of them being equivalent to their heat. The fire of the world in the ḥadīth means all of it; the highest level of the fire of the world is lower than the fire of the afterworld by sixty nine degrees. This is why Allah Almighty has described it as *al-Nār al-Kubrā*, the Great Fire. When this fire has roasted the rejecter “**then he shall neither die therein, nor live.**”

It means: He will not die so that he could get respite. Nor will he live a life of blessing. Otherwise the dwellers of Hell will be alive. But they will be being punished in that life. Allah says: “as often as their skins are wholly burned, We shall give them in exchange other skins.” (Q 4:56) He also says in Surah al-Zukhruf: “And they shall call, 'O Malik, (who is the custodian of the Fire of Hell) let your Lord have done with us!' (That is, destroy us and give us respite from this punishment) He will say, 'You will surely tarry' (and there is no respite for you. And it will be said to them). 'We brought you the truth, but most of you were averse to the truth.' (Q 43:78) This is why we say that this is the meaning of the words “**he shall neither die therein, nor live.**” For we see that it has been difficult for some people to appreciate how can a creature be not alive and not ne dead? A man can either be alive or dead.

So we say that it means: He will not die so that he could get a respite from the punishment. Nor will he be alive, living a life of success and blessing. Rather he will be in grievous chastisement. He will have a strong desire to die but it will not be afforded him. This is the meaning of the divine words “**he shall neither die therein, nor live.**”

Verses 14-19

Prosperous is (*aflaḥa*) he who has cleansed himself (*tazakkā*), and mentions the Name of his Lord, and prays. The verb *aflaḥa* is derived from *falāḥ*, which is a comprehensive term. It means: Success to achieve the objective, safety from the dreadful. This is the meaning of the term *falāḥ*. It is a term comprehensively covering every good and implying security from every evil. The word *tazakkā* is derived from *tazkiyah* which means: purification. *Thezakāh* (obligatory charity) is termed *zakāh* on the basis that it purifies a man from a lowly morality; stinginess and miserliness. Allah Almighty says:

“Take of their wealth a freewill offering, to purify them (*tuṭahhiru hum*) and to cleanse them (*wa tuzakkīhim*) thereby.” (Q 9:103) That is, you purify them externally and internally. First, the *zakāh* purifies the person from polytheism, a matter concerning the relation with Allah, and he worships Him, making his religion exclusively for Him. He does not give that with the view to be seen or seeking status, leadership in his worship of Allah. Rather he intends to give *zakāh* in the way of Allah and to secure his life after death. By following the Messenger of Allah he is cleansed.

He does not introduce minor or major innovations. Neither in belief nor in word and nor in action. This cleansing is in relation to the Messenger of Allah. The person enters the folds of his followers, without falling in innovation. He does not follow any path except the path of the pious elders, the people of Sunnah and the collectiveness; the party which believes in everything Allah has described in His book or through the tongue of His Messenger. They strictly follow the path of the pious elders, who don't introduce innovations in the worships of the religion of Allah; neither in the worships comprising of recitations and sayings nor in the practical worship rituals. You see that they follow the *Sharī'ah* as opposed to the practice of some of the innovators who have introduced new statements and formulas to remember Allah. These innovations can be of genre, of quality and characteristics of worship, or in the ways of performance as done by some of the innovating Sufis and others. Similarly, the believer gets purified concerning his relation and dealing with the rest of the people. His heart gets pure of enmity and hatred for the believing Muslims. You see this worshipper (who pays *zakāh*) has his heart pure all the time. He loves for his brothers what he loves for himself. He does not like that anyone is touched by an evil or harm. Rather he loves that all the people remain safe from all evils. He loves that they have the ability to do good.

Thus “who has cleansed himself (*tazakkā*)” means: Who has cleansed his external and internal self. His hidden and internal self is purified of the vile acts of associating partners to Allah, doubt, hypocrisy, enmity for the believers, hatred and other things from which one's heart must be purified. The cleansing of his external being is that he does not let his tongue freely injure others, keeps his body parts in check from transgressing against the servants of Allah. Thus he does not backbite, does not slander, and does not abuse anyone. Nor does he transgress against anyone by hitting them or grabbing their belongings or any other thing. Thus *tazakkī* is a general term which covers purity from every apparent and hidden impurity. Thus the *tazkiyah* has three aspects: First, in relation to Allah's rights, second, its relation to the rights of the Prophet [pbuh] and third, its relation to the rights of general people.

In relation to Allah a man purifies himself from polytheism. Thus he worships Allah with sincerity and exclusively follows His religion. In relation to the Prophet [pbuh] the purifying man frees himself from innovation and worships Allah according to the Sharī'ah brought by the Messenger of Allah in belief, saying and action. In relation to the general people one purifies himself from enmity, cheating, and hatred for them. Anything that leads one to enmity and hatred for the Muslims is abandoned by him. He does everything that creates love for them. These things include: spreading the greetings about which Allah's Messenger [pbuh] said: "You shall not enter Jannah unless you believe. You don't believe unless you love each other. Shouldn't I guide you to something which if you do will create mutual love? Spread greetings among you." [4]

Thus greeting one another is the strongest means of creating love among the Muslims. This is something we observe ourselves. If a man passes by you and he does not greet you that will create something in your heart. If you don't greet him you create a dislike in his heart for you. If you greet him or he greets you, that will become a rope binding you both in love and affection. Allah's Messenger has said: "You say *salām* (Greetings) to those you know and those you don't know." [5] Today the majority of people don't greet people whom they don't know. They only greet those whom they know. This is wrong. If you greet only those whom you know then your greeting is not purely for the sake of Allah. Therefore, you should greet those of the Muslims you know and those you don't know so that you can create love among the Muslims, a perfect faith. The objective is that we all enter Jannah. May Allah make us deserving of it!

The divine statement: "**and mentions the Name of his Lord, and prays.**" It means he remembers Allah. Allah has mentioned His name so that one can remember Him with one's tongue. It is by tongue one mentions the name of Allah. Thus for example he says: *Subḥān Allah* (Allah is pure of all shortcomings), *al-ḥamdu lillāhi* (all praise is due to Allah), *Allahu akbar* (God is great). Thus the person mentions the name of Allah. Mentioning the name of Allah also implies worshipping Him. Thus mentioning the name of Allah also implies making *wuḍū*. *wuḍū* is to mention the name of Allah in many ways. First, one does not make *wuḍū* except in following the command of Allah. Second, when one starts making *wuḍū* one invokes the name of Allah and says: "in the name of Allah." When he finishes making *wuḍū* he says: "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad [pbuh] is His servant and Messenger. O Allah, count me among the repentant, and make me among the pure."

A mention of the name of Allah is also implied in the sermon of the Friday Congregation. The sermon of the Friday Congregation is remembering Allah's name as Allah says: "O believers, when proclamation is made for prayer on the Day of Congregation, hasten to God's remembrance and leave trafficking aside." (Q 62:9) Based on this some of the scholars have held that the words "**and mentions the Name of his Lord**" mean: the Imam of the Friday Congregation who mentions His name in his sermon. "And prays" means: He prays the Friday Prayer. Thus this verse covers all the prayers which are followed by mentioning the name of Allah. All the prayers are followed by mentioning of the name of Allah. The reason is that a believer makes *wuḍū* before offering prayer and thus he mentions Allah's name and then offers prayer.

However, the sound view is that this expression is more general and comprehensive than what has been said in the previously mentioned viewpoint. So all the forms of mentioning the name of Allah are included and covered by it. Whenever a man mentions the name of Allah he gets admonished, proceeds to Allah and offers prayer. The known form of the *ṣalāh* is a worship that covers ritual, sayings and actions. It is inaugurated by *takbīr* (saying: Allah is great) and is concluded by *taslīm*.

Then the Almighty says: "**Nay (bal), but you prefer the present life; and the world to come is better, and more enduring.**" The particle *bal* here is the kind called transitional reversal. This we say because there two types of reversals: transitional and negating. Here Allah Almighty changed the subject and proceeded to explain the state of humans. They are told to have preference for the worldly life which is here and present. Man has been created out of haste. He loves what is immediate. Thus you see that he prefers the life here over the life hereafter. The life of the world in reality is nearer in time, and nearer in attribute. It is nearer in time because it precedes the hereafter. Thus it comes first. The root *dunuww* out of which the word *dunyā*, world, has been derived gives the meaning of nearness. As for it being an imperfect world – that is also a reality. However long one's life in this world is yet its end will be death. Its conclusion is destruction. However a man's world flourishes, it has to fade away. This is why we see that even if you are in happiness one day you will find another day following it that will bring you sorrow. Concerning this issue a poet says:

"A day against us and a day for us,"

One day we are sad and the other day we are happy.

Consider your condition in the life of the world. You will not see a time that happiness permanently remains with you. Rather there must be some worry. Happiness does not remain forever with you. Rather you must find some gloom. Nor is ease there forever. Rather you must find exhaustion. Thus the *dunyā* as depicted by its very name is ephemeral **“and the world to come is better, and more enduring.”** The afterworld is better than the present world and it is more enduring. It is better in terms of blessings and happiness which are permanent and it is not marred by any impurity. “No fatigue there shall smite them; neither shall they ever be driven forth from there.” (Q 15:48) Similarly, it is also enduring than the life of this present world. This we say because as said earlier the present world is ephemeral as opposed to the afterlife which is forever.

“Surely this is in the ancient scrolls, the scrolls of Abraham and Moses.” “This is,” that is, what has been said about the fact that man prefers the life of this world on the afterword and forgets the latter. Similarly, it also refers to the implied teachings and exhortations in the preceding verses. This is **“in the ancient scrolls.”** That is, the scripture that came before this ummah; **the scrolls of Abraham and Moses.** This is a reference to the scriptures brought by Ibrahim and Moses [pbut]. Those scriptures contained teachings and exhortations that softened one’s heart and reformed one’s conditions. We beseech Allah to make us among those who have been blessed with the good in this life and good in the afterlife! May He save us from the fire of Hell. Indeed He is the most generous.

[1] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 9, Book of Monotheism, Chapter: Allah Hears all and Sees all; Musnīn of Ahmad: 6:46.

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 1362, Book of Funerals, Chapter: Preacher delivering a lecture at a grave; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2647, Book of Predestination, Chapter: How The Human Being Is Created, In His Mother's Womb.

[3] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2843 (43), Book of al-Jannah, Chapter: Fire of Hell.

[4] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 45(93), Book of Faith, Chapter: Clarifying that no one will enter paradise but the believers; loving the believers is part of faith and spreading Salam is a means of attaining that.

[5] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 6236, Book of Seeking Permission, Chapter: Greeting to the Known and the unknown; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 63/(39), Book of Faith, Chapter: Clarifying the superiority of Islam, and what part of it is best.

Sūrah al-Ghāshiyah: 88

Verses 1-7

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The verse *basmalah* has already been explained.

Have you received the story of the Enveloper? The verse can possibly be addressed to the Prophet [pbuh] alone and the ummah as his follower through him. It can also be a general statement addressed to everyone the Qur'an addresses. The verse uses the style of rhetorical question in order to encourage the addressee to attend to the matter at hand. It is similar to the following saying of Allah Almighty: "O believers, shall I direct you to a commerce that shall deliver you from a painful chastisement?" (Q 61:10) It is also possible that the rhetorical question has been put considering the magnitude and immense importance of the Enveloper. Hadith *al-ghāshishah*, means: the story of the Enveloper. Al-Ghāshiyah refers to a great calamity which will cover and envelope the people. It will be unfolded on the Last Day and the Almighty has discussed it many times in the Qur'an. He has described it with many attributes. An example is the following words of the Almighty: "O men, fear your Lord! Surely the earthquake of the Hour is a mighty thing; on the day when you behold it, every suckling woman shall neglect the child she has suckled, and every pregnant woman shall deposit her burden, and you shall see mankind drunk, yet they are not drunk, but God's chastisement is terrible.(Q 22:1-2)

Then the Almighty has described that on that day the people will be divided in two kinds. He says: "**Faces on that day humbled (*khāshī'ah*)**". The term *al-khāshī'ah* means humbled as Allah describes elsewhere: "And you shall see them, as they are exposed to it, abject in humbleness, looking with furtive glance." (Q 42:45) Thus the word *khāshī'ah* means: humbled. "**Labouring, toilworn (*nāsibah*)**." They will be carrying out tasks that wear one out (*al-naṣb* means tiredness). The scholars have said: This has been said because those people will on the day be made to drag the chains and will be made to dive in the Fire of Hell the way a man falls into mud. Thus they will be doing tiresome deeds with which they will on the Day of Judgment be burdened. It is actually to bear the punishment and chastisement.

It does not, as some scholars have thought, refer to the disbelievers whose efforts in this world got lost and they continue thinking that they are doing a great good. This is proved by that the Allah has specified this saying by that that these faces will be such on that day, that is, the day *Ghāshiyah* will occur.

It is known that it will happen on the Day of Judgment alone. Thus the faces will be “laboring and toilword” due to the act of carrying the chains and diving in the Fire of Hell. May Allah save us from it!

“Roasting at a scorching fire.” That is these faces will enter the Fire of Hell; the scorching fire whose heat is such severe that it is sixty nine times stronger than the life of this world. The extreme heat of the entire fire on this world is sixty nine times lesser than the extremity of the fire of Hell. This leads to that the fire will be extremely hot. The heat of sun reaches us from a very far off place. It also passes through space which is extremely cold. Yet the sun’s heat that reaches us is very hot especially in the Summer days. (You can compare it with the Fire of Hell.) The Fire of Hell is scorching one. When the Almighty explained their station and told us that they will be in the scorching heat of the Fire of Hell, He also explained their food. He says:

Watered (*tusqā*) at a boiling fountain; No food for them but cactus thorn. *Tusqā*, that is, these faces will be watered at a boiling fountain (*āniyah*). That is, extremely heat. This relates to their drink. This drink will not be given them easily nor will they be offered the drink as soon as became thirsty. This drink will be given them when their thirst reaches its climax. Allah says: “if they call for succour, they will be succoured with water like molten copper, that shall scald their faces -- how evil a potion.” (Q 18:29) When this water will burn their faces as it comes close to them and remove their flesh. When it will reach their stomachs it will tear it in pieces. Allah Almighty says: “such as are given to drink boiling water, that tears their bowels asunder?” (Q 47”15) They will not be able to take any benefit from this water; neither externally nor internally. Not externally because it will destroy their faces. Nor internally because it will not water it; rather it will be a chastisement for them. May Allah save us! This is why Allah says: **Watered (*tusqā*) at a boiling fountain.** If someone questions this and says: How can this water be found in the Fire of Hell while water puts out the fire?

The response to this objection is this: First, the realities of the Hereafter can’t be judged with analogy to the physical rules of this world. If we were to understand the realities of the hereafter through the criterion of the life here then we would not be able to affirm them. Don’t we know that the sun will draw near to men on the Last Day and come as close as to a *mīl* above the heads? The word *mīl* has two meanings. It either means the *mīl al-makhalah*, kohl stick which is half a finger long. It may also mean the mile equaling a kilometer and something. Even if it the latter meaning that is implied here and we suppose the afterworld to be like this one the people would still be roasted in the heat of the sun. But the hereafter should not be compared to this world. Another point is that the people will be brought to life and

gathered in a single place and some of them will be in pitch darkness and some in clear light. Allah says: “Their light running before them, and on their right hands.” (Q 66:8) They all will be gathered in one place. They will perspire. Perspiration of some will be reaching to their elbows and of some to their knees and of some to their groin. This is in spite of that they all will be a single place. This shows that we can’t compare the conditions of the afterlife to this world.

Secondly, Allah has power over everything. We see that fire is made of a green tree. Allah says: “Who has made for you out of the green tree fire and lo, from it you kindle.” (Q 36:80) A green tree is has moist. Even then when a part of it is struck against another or it is struck against a trigger it starts burning and issuing hot fire. And this is a cold and moist thing. Thus Allah has power over everything. Thus the people of the Fire will be watered with hot water of Fire and there is no contradiction as Allah has power to do anything.

Coming to their food, we see that Allah says: “**no food for them but cactus thorn (*al-darī*) unfattening, unappeasing hunger.**” About the word “*al-darī*” the scholars have said: *al-darī* is a tree of huge thorns. When it is dried the animals don’t touch it. When it is green the camels eat it but in that case it is called *al-shabraq*. The dwellers of Hell, may Allah save us, will not be given any food other than this tree. But you must not confuse the *al-darī* in the Hell with the *al-darī* of this world. There is a huge difference between the two. This is why Allah says: “**unfattening, (that is, the bodies will not benefit from it in physical sense) unappeasing hunger.**” Nor will help when it goes inside the body. It has no good for them. It is thorny, bitter and bad smelling. They will not benefit from it in the least.

Then the Almighty mentions the second group of people on the Day of Judgment, *al-ghāshiyah* and He says:

Verses 8-16

Faces on that day jocund (*nā’imah*). They will be *nā’imah*, jocund, because Allah will grant the happiness and great reward. They will have knowledge of this from the time they would be in their graves. A man is blessed by Allah in the grave. A door to jannah is opened for him when he is in the grave. The smell and air of jannah reach him. This is why he is *nā’imah*. **With their striving well-pleased.** That is, they will be well pleased with their good actions that they do in the life of the world. For it is due to these good deeds the man will be able to win this blessing and happiness. Thus he will be pleased with his condition contrary to the situation of the people of the first group who will be angry.

May Allah save us! They will not be happy on what they have done in their life.

In a sublime Garden. That is, they will be in the house of blessings which Allah has prepared for His friends to be granted them on the Last Day. It contains what no eye has ever seen nor any ear has ever heard of. It has never struck to any heart. Allah Almighty says: “No soul knows what comfort is laid up for them secretly, as a recompense for that they were doing.” (Q 32:17) And Allah says: “Prosperous are the believers who in their prayers are humble and from idle talk turn away and at almsgiving. [...] Those are the inheritors who shall inherit Paradise therein dwelling forever.” (Q 23:1-11). Allah also says: “Therein being whatever the souls desire, and the eyes delight in. 'And therein, you shall dwell forever.” (Q 43:73)

Thus they will be **in a sublime (‘āliyah) Garden.** ‘uluww, height, is opposite of *sufūl*, depth. Thus these gardens are situated high above the seven heavens. It is also known that the seven heavens and the earths will remain no more on the Last Day. Nothing will remain except Jannah and Hell. The jannah is degrees. High. Higher. And the intermediate. The central is *firdaus* upon which the throne of the Almighty will be.

Hearing there no babble (lāghiyah). The implication is that in this jannah they will not hear any saying that is nonsense. Alternatively, they will not hear anyone who babbles. On the contrary everything in this jannah will be serious and perfect. Everything one hears in it will be peace and greetings, or glorification of Allah, exaltation of Allah. The people will say and find glorification as easy as they find it easy to breath. It will not be hard upon them. Thus they will ever remain remembering Allah, glorifying Him, in peace and pleasure. Some of them would go to the others. They will visit each other in an incomparable gladness.

Therein a running fountain. These fountains have been explained by Allah as canals and rivers. Allah says: “Therein are rivers of water unstaling, rivers of milk unchanging in flavour, and rivers of wine -- a delight to the drinkers, rivers, too, of honey purified.” (Q 47:15) *Running, Jāriyay.* That is, these fountains would be ready, running. When the dwellers of jannah will need water they would not need to dig a well. Nor would they need to make holes and openings. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allah shower mercy upon him, says:

Its canals would flow without channels (to run in). Pure is the Entity which keeps it from flooding.

Therein uplifted couches, and goblets set forth, and cushions arrayed, and carpets outspread. For a comparison of the words “Therein uplifted couches” high upon which they will sit and chat. “They and their spouses, reclining on the cushions under the shade.” (Q 36:56) **And goblets (*akwāb*) set forth.** *akwāb* is plural form of *kūb* which refers to glasses, goblets and the like. **Set forth.** These goblets will be set forth for them so that they could drink from these canals previously mentioned whenever they felt like. **And cushions arrayed,** in the best and the most beautiful style which catches the eyes before one finds their comfort by reclining on them. **And carpets outspread (*zarābiyyu*).** *al-zarābī* refers to the highest and the best form of the carpets. *Mabthūthah*, that is, **outspread**, everywhere.

Don't think that these carpets, these goblets or cushions or couches would like the ones we see in this world. Though they resemble to the ones found in this world yet we know that the blessings of the Hereafter in their essence are not like the ones found in this world. As Allah says: “No soul knows what comfort is laid up for them secretly, as a recompense for that they were doing.” (Q 32:17) The names are the same. But the realities would be different. This is why Ibn ‘Abbās [rta] said: “There is nothing in the Hereafter from the things of this world except the names they share.”[1] So we don't know the reality and essence of those blessings of the life Hereafter. We only observe things that share their names. Therefore, there is a great difference between the two.

Verses 17-26

Allah has mentioned the story of *al-ghāshiyah*, the enveloper, that is, the Day of Judgment. He also explained that on that day the people will be two groups. 1. Faces humbled, labouring, toilworn, roasting at a scorching fire and 2) Faces jocund, with their striving well-pleased. Now He says: **What, do they not consider how the camel was created.** This is a rhetorical question implying stern warning and rebuke. The Almighty Allah rebukes the people who rejected the news of the Last Day and the reward and punishment therein given to them by Allah Almighty. The Almighty condemns their aversion from looking into the signs of Allah before them. He started from a mention of the camel because camel was the creature directly related to their life most of all. They would ride it, gain milk from it, eat its flesh, use its wool and take other benefits from it. Thus Allah says: **What, do they not consider how the camel was created.** That is, how Allah has created this huge powerful body. You see that a camel carries loads and travels a long distance which a man could not reach without great efforts. Similarly, the camel also gets up without help after being loaded when it is sitting down. Generally animals are unable to stand up straight after being loaded when they are sitting.

However, camel has been given such power and ability for the benefit of man. Man can't get on the camel while it is standing as the animal is tall. The Almighty made it easy for men to ride the camel while it is sitting and then it gets up carrying the man on its back. Allah Almighty says in Sūrah Yāsīn: "Other uses also they have in them, and beverages. What, will they not be thankful?" (Q 36:73) The uses of the camel are uncountable. The people who keep and use them knew that better than us. This is why Allah says: "**What, do they not consider how the camel was created.**" Allah Almighty has not mentioned other animals like sheep, cows, deer and others because camels is the animal whose uses and benefits for men far exceed than that of the rest of the animals.

How heaven was lifted up. That is, don't they look at the heavens how it has been lifted up? It has stars, sun, moon and other great signs of Allah. The heavenly bodies are so many that man has not yet known all of them. We don't say that it is only these signs that we know in the heavens are all the signs. There might be greater and more important signs which we not yet known. The words: "how it was lifted up" mean: It has been raised to this height. Moreover, there are no pillars to support it. Generally the roofs are supported by pillars. But this roof is safe and stands without a pillar. Allah says: "God is He who raised up the heavens without pillars you can see." (Q 13:2)

How the mountains were hoisted. These huge mountains which carry upon them rocks and hills formed of immensely great stones etc. These mountains also contain variety of mineral resources lying near one another. You know that this area around the equator contains minerals that are not found in the other areas. This is known to the geologists. How Allah has implanted these huge mountains and put them this high so that they can work as nails in the land and the earth does not move away carrying men. Had Allah not planted these mountains, the earth would have flowed along with those dwelling on it. Land is placed in the middle of water. Water covers it from all sides. Don't you think that if a ball is put in the middle of water would soon move, shake and get upside down? But Allah has made these mountains keep the earth the way nails keep the tent. The mountains are fixed in the land and keep it firm even if there arise great cyclones that at times fell the greatest architecture erected by humans. But these mountains are established firm and survive even the worst cyclones.

The benefits of these mountains include the following: These shield the cyclones and hurricanes which rise from the oceans or outside oceans so that these destructive forces don't take men with them. This is an observable phenomenon. You know that the people who shelter besides the mountains

and under them in the earth remain safe when the hurricanes etc come from the other side of the mountain. Thus these mountains have great benefits. They work as pillars. If all the creatures of Allah gathered to together and tried to place such a series of the mountains they would not be able to accomplish that in spite of the progress, technology, power and long life. They would not be able to bring anything like these mountains.

Some of the scholars have held that these mountains are rooted in the earth to the depth comparable to their height above. That is, a mountain have roots and body going down in the earth to the length that is equal to the body of the same mountain going out up in the heavens. This is not improbable that a certain mountain is put firm by God this way so that it is not removed or moved by the winds. Thus Allah says: “And He cast on the earth firm mountains, lest it shake with you, and rivers and ways; so haply you will be guided; and way marks; and by the stars they are guided.” (Q 16:15-6)

Allah says: **how the earth was outstretched?** That is, ponder over how the Almighty has stretched this vast earth. He made it a vast surface so that humans can live on it, engage in agriculture on it and build buildings upon it. Had Allah made it vertical like for example the surface of the mountains it would be hard for men to remain on it firmly. But Allah has made it vast and outstretched for His creations. Some of the scholars have pleaded to this verse to hold that the earth is not round. Rather it is flat surface. However, this argumentation is subject to criticism. There are signs and arguments proving that the earth is round and not flat. The real argument for that the earth is found is the following saying of Allah: “He created the heavens and the earth in truth, wrapping (*yukawwuru*) night about the day, and wrapping the day about the night.” (Q 39:5). *Takwīr* (verbal noun of *yukawwuru*) means to revolve.

It is a known fact that the day and night follow each other on the earth. When they are circular the earth must also be circular as Allah Almighty has said: “When heaven is rent asunder and gives ear to its Lord, and is fitly disposed; when earth is stretched out and casts forth what is in it, and voids itself.” (Q 84:1-4) The divine statement “when earth is stretched out” refers to the Last Day.

It has been said in the Hadith that the earth will on the Last Day be stretched like a hide is stretched.[2] There will remain no mountains, wadis, trees, and buildings. Allah will make it into a horizontally levelled ground. You won't see any crookedness and undulations in it. Thus the divine words “when heaven is rent asunder” refer to the happening on the last day. It will not be rent asunder before the Day of Judgment. It means at the present time it is not

broken in pieces. Similarly, the words “when earth is stretched out and casts forth what is in it, and voids itself” refer to the happening on the Last Day. It is not flattened today. It is round. The certain reality in which there is no doubt is that at the present it is round.[3] The argument for this conclusion is that if you start moving from this country in a single direction to the west you would reach the same point from the eastern side. You would continue rounding the earth till you reach the point you set off from. The same would happen if you took an opposite direction. If you start moving to the east, you would find yourself facing the same point from the western side after a complete round. This shows there the earth is undoubtedly round.

If someone objects to that and says: If the earth is really round as you say then how does water stay on it while it is round?

Our response to this objection follows: The Almighty who keeps the heavens above and holds them from falling on the earth keeps the oceans from spilling over and flooding against the humans destroying them. Allah has power over everything. Some of the scholars have said that the verse “when the seas shall be set boiling” (Q 81:6) means: *hubisat*, stopped from spilling over the humans. It will be held like something tied (*yusjaru*). In every case we can’t object to the power of Allah. We say: Allah’s power has held these oceans from spilling over to the people of the earth and destroying them even if the earth is round.

After explaining these four signs of Allah, camel, the heavens, mountains and the earth, the Almighty commands the Prophet [pbuh]: “Then remind (them)!” Allah commanded him to remind the people and did not specify any individual or individuals to be warned. He did not say remind this or that person or persons. Thus reminder is general. The Messenger of Allah was sent to the entire humanity. The implication of the verse therefore is: Remind everyone in every circumstances and at every place. The Prophet [pbuh] did issue these reminders and so did his successors after him. They reminded the people concerning knowledge, actions and preaching. However, will everyone take benefit from this reminder? The answer is: No. For the reminder benefits only the believers. (Q 51:55). The reminder leaves the disbelievers without any excuse for them. However, it does not benefit them. The reminder benefits only believers. Therefore, we say: If you are reminded and you don’t feel that it is affecting your heart then you should blame your *nafs* for this. You should learn that there is a problem in your faith. If your faith would be perfect you would take benefit from these reminders. The reminder must benefit the believer.

You are only a reminder. That is, Muhammad [pbuh] is only a reminder and a communicator of the truth. As for the guidance of an addressee that is in the

hands of Allah. Allah says: “You are not responsible for guiding them; but God guides whomsoever He will.” (Q 2:272) Allah’s Messenger continued issuing reminder and preaching the truth to his last moments. Even right before his death he said: “(Be careful about) Ṣalāh, Ṣalāh, and what your right hands possess.”[4] This he uttered till his sound went off with these. Thus Allah Almighty continued fulfilling this duty from the start of his prophethood when it was commanded to him by God: “Stand up and warn” (Q 74:2) till he departed this world. He did not leave any stone unturned in this effort. He did that at every occasion at every time even when if he faced great persecution and suffering at the hand of his nation and others. Anyone who has an exposure to history and the life of the Prophet [pbuh] knows what sufferings he faced at the hands of the people of Makkah; his nation who were the closest of all people to him. They knew him. They called him trustworthy.

They had great trust in him and it were they who made him a judge at the time of placement of the Black Stone. The Quraysh had felled the building of Ka‘bah. They were rebuilding it. When the building reached the point where the Black Stone was to be put the question arose who would put the stone there. The Quraysh had difference of opinion and they fell into dispute. Every clan claimed that they would put the Stone at its proper place. The dispute continued till the Prophet [pbuh] reached there. They appointed him as arbitrator and decided to follow his decision. The Prophet [pbuh] put his cloak on the ground and made their leaders to hold the cloth. He put the Stone in the cloth and asked the Quraysh to raise it all together. When it was lifted to the point where it was to be put the Prophet [pbuh] took it from the cloth and put it in its place with his hands.[5]

Thus they would call him with the epithet of trustworthy. But when the Almighty blessed him with the status of the Prophet [pbuh] their measures changed. They started calling him a soothsayer, magician, mad and liar. They attributed every bad thing to him. The Prophet’s [pbuh] duty is to remind. He is obliged to do that alone. From this verse we learn that to guide someone or not lies in the hands of the Almighty. We can’t make the nearest of our relatives get guided by ourselves. Allah says: “You don’t guide whom you likes, but God guides whom He wills.” (Q 28:56). Thus when we remind someone of the truth and he does not respond and shows haughtiness we should not get sad. If he says: “I do what I like”, we should not get disappointed. Allah Almighty says to His Prophet [pbuh]: “Perchance you consume yourself that they are not believers.” (Q 26:3) Don’t consume yourself if they don’t believe. If they believe it will be their own benefit and if they don’t you are not responsible for their disbelief. This is why Allah says: “**You are not charged to oversee them.**” That is, you have no power over them. Nor are you an overseer

over them. The power lies in the hand of Lord who rules all. You only have to communicate the truth fully. The power and rule remains in the hand of Allah. Allah says: **But (*illā*) he who turns his back, and disbelieves, God shall chastise him with the greatest chastisement.** The scholars have said: The particle *illā* in this verse meaning but, *lākin*. The exception in the verse is broken. It is not *muttasil*, immediate. The difference between the two types of exceptions is the *muttasil* exception implies introducing exception from the genre of the class from which the exception is introduced. In the case of broken exception the exempted thing is not the part of the class from which apparently the exception is being made. If we held that in the verse the exception is *muttasil* it would mean: You are not an overseer over anyone except for the one who turns his back and disbelieves. Thus you will be an overseer upon the arrogant and the disbelievers. This is not sound. The actual implication is that the ones who turn their back and disbelieve after you have preached to them the truth will be punished by Allah by a grievous chastisement. Thus whoever turns his back and disbelieves after having received the revelation from Allah through His Messenger will be punished.

But he who turns his back, and disbelieves. To turn one's back means: to turn down the truth and not consider it. Such a person does not accept the truth. He does not listen to it either. If the truth strikes his ears he does not pay heed to it. Allah says: "O believers, obey God and His Messenger, and do not turn away from Him, even as you are listening; and be not as those who say, 'We hear,' and they hear not." (Q 8:20-1) They don't hear means: They don't follow it. In the Sūrah under study Allah says: "**But he who turns his back (*tawallā*), and disbelieves (*kafara*).**" *Tawallā* means: turns his back. *kafara* means: He behaves haughtily and does not accept the message of the Messenger.

God shall chastise him with the greatest chastisement. The greatest chastisement will be given on the Last Day. Here Allah says: *al-akbar*. He does not describe the chastisement in detail. He does not say from which it is greater. The punishment will be of the greatest degree, giving extreme pain and humility. Anyone who turns his back and disbelieves will be punished by the greatest punishment. There is also a minor chastisement which can befall in this life of the world. At times a man suffers from bodily diseases and mental diseases. He can suffer loss in his wealth or in his social life. All such problems are smaller as compared to the punishment of Hell in the afterlife. The greater punishment will be given on the Last Day. This is why following this divine saying Allah says:

Truly, to Us is their return. That is, their return. To return to God is must. Wherever a man flees from Allah he can't escape. He will have to turn to His Lord. No matter how long he lives he shall return to Him. This is why Allah

says: “O Man! You are labouring to your Lord laboriously, and you shall encounter Him.” (Q 84:6) Therefore, O brother, prepare yourself for this meeting with your Lord. You are going to meet your Lord. The Prophet of Allah has said: “Allah will surely speak with everyone of you without an interpreter. (That is, speak directly. There will not be any interpreter between the two. Allah will speak to everyone on the Last Day.) He (the man) will look at his right side and will see nothing but (the deeds) which he had done before, and he will look to his left side and will see nothing but (the deeds) which he had done before. Then he will look in front of him and will find nothing but Hell-fire facing him. So protect (yourselves) from (Hell) Fire, by giving in charity even half a date.”[6]

Each and every one of us will meet His Lord on the Last Day alone. He will make us admit our sins. He will say: You did such and such deed on such and such day. The man will acknowledge and admit his sin. When the man will have acknowledged that Allah will say: “I covered it up for you in the life of world, and I forgive it for you today.”[7] How many of the sins of man Allah covers! A great number of sins we humans commit which none by Allah knows. We should seek Allah’s forgiveness for such sins. We should also do good deeds in great number so that the good deeds remove the bad ones so that when we meet Allah we are in a condition that is pleasing to Allah.

Then upon Us shall rest their reckoning. We shall reckon them. The scholars have said: The accountability by Allah is not like the strict investigation humans do. If Allah subjects a man to such strict accountability he would be surely destroyed. If Allah decides to hold you in account for the blessings He has given you like for example sight you would not be able to do anything equal to this blessing. Then you breathe without any difficulty and tiredness. The worth of breathing is not known except to those who find it hard to breath. At that time one remembers the blessing of Allah. But as long as one remains safe from any such disease one says this is natural to breathe. But when one suffers from something causing problem in his breathing he immediately knows the value of the blessing. If such a man is made to account for this blessing he would be destroyed. Allah’s Messenger said to ‘Ā’ishah [rta]: “He who is examined thoroughly in reckoning is undone.”[8] According to another version he said: (He will be) punished.[9]

What is the nature of the accountability? A believer will meet his Lord in private. There will be none between them two. The man will confess his sins. He will say he has done such and such deeds. When he will have confessed his sins Allah will say: “I covered it up for you in the life of world, and I forgive it for you today.” The disbelievers will not be put to trial this way. They don’t have good deeds which can undo their sins. Their deeds will be counted for

them. They will confess the sins in the assembly of all men. It will be declared in the open assembly: “Those are they who lied against their Lord. Surely the curse of God shall rest upon the evildoers.” (Q 11:18) We seek Allah’s refuge from the ultimate humiliation.

At this the commentary on this Sūrah concludes. It is one of the two Sūrahs which the Prophet [pbuh] would recite in many congregations. He would recite in the Eid prayers Sūrah al-A‘lā and Sūrah al-Ghāshiyah. Similarly, he would recite these two Sūrahs in the Friday Congregations.[10] At times in the Eid prayers he would recite Sūrah Qāf (50) and al-Qamar (54).[11] In the Friday Congregations he would recite Sūrah al-Jumu‘ah (Q 62) and Sūrah al-Munafiqūn (Q 63).[12] At some occasions he would recite the first group and at others the other. We beseech Allah to count us among those whose faces will on that day be jocund (*nā‘imah*) with their striving well-pleased and to help us with His blessing and favours in this life and the one to come. He surely has power over everything.

[1] The reference to this ḥadīth has already passed on page 136.

[2] Musnad of Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal 1:375; Sunan Ibn Mājjah, No: 4081, Book of Tribulations, Chapter: The Trial of Dajjāl.

[3] See the Collection of Fatāwā and Rasā’il of our teacher, may Allah bless him 1/70.

[4] Musnad of Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal, 3/117; Sunan Ibn Mājjah, No: 2698, Book of Testamentary Wills, Chapter: Did the Prophet [pbuh] leave a will?

[5] See al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah of Ibn Kathīr, may Allah bless him: 3:479.

[6] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 1413, Book of Zakāh, Chapter: To practise charity before such time when nobody would accept it; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1016 (67), Book of Zakāh, Chapter: Encouragement to give charity even if it is with half a date.

[7] The reference to this ḥadīth has already passed on page 52.

[8] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 4939, Book of *Tafsīr*, Chapter: The Divine Words: He surely will receive an easy reckoning; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2876 (80), Book of Jannah and Its Blessings, Chapter: The Surety Of Reckoning.

[9] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2786 (79), Book of Jannah and Its Blessings, Chapter: The Surety Of Reckoning.

[10] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 878 (62), Book of Friday Prayer, Chapter: What is recited in the Friday Congregation.

[11] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 891 (14), Book of Eid Prayers, Chapter: What is recited in the Eid prayers.

[12] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 878 (61), Book of Friday Prayers, Chapter: What is recited in the Friday prayers.

Sūrah al-Balad: 90

Verses 1-10

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The verse *basmalah* has already been explained.

No (lā)! I swear by this land. The particle *lā*, (literally, no) has been used here for inaugurating the speech (*istiftāḥ*). It also has the use of stressing the statement. It is not the *lā* used to negate the statement. The intention of the speaker is to establish the sworn fact. The implication is: I swear by this land. The *lā* is bought for warning and stress. ***uqsimu***: I swear. Oath is employed to stress a fact by a mention of an exalted thing. Everything by which we swear an oath must be exalted in the eyes of the person swearing. At times it is not exalted in itself. For example the people who swear by the deities like al-Lāt and al-‘Uzzā exalt these deities. But in reality these idols are neither exalted nor great. Thus the *ḥalf* or *qasm* or *yamīn* give the same meaning: stressing a fact by a mention of an entity exalted in the eyes of the swearer particularly.

The particles used to express an oath in Arabic are *Bā*, *Wāw*, *Tā*, and *Bā*, which has been used in this verse: **No (lā)! I swear by (bi) this land.** The *balad*, city, land, town in this verse is Makkah. Allah has sworn by Makkah because of its excellence and greatness. It is the best part of the earth in terms of its sanctity. It is the most beloved of all parts of the earth in the sight of Allah. This is why He has raised His Messenger who is the leader of all humans, may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him, from this town. Therefore, this city deserves that an oath is sworn by it. However, we don’t swear an oath by it because it is a created thing. We don’t have the right to swear an oath by anything created. Allah’s Messenger has said: “Whoever swears an oath by anything other than Allah is a disbeliever or a polytheist.”[1] As for Allah Almighty, He has the right to swear by anything He wills. That is why He has, in this context, sworn an oath by the city of Makkah.

No! I swear by this land, and you are a lodger in this land. It has been held by some authorities that the implication is: I swear by this land while you are dwelling in it. This implies that the Prophet’s stay in Makkah adds to its honour. Another view is that it means: I swear by this city while you hold it allowable for you. In this sense the Almighty is swearing by the city of Makkah while it is allowable for the Prophet [pbuh] to attack. It was made allowable for the Prophet [pbuh] during the year of the Conquest. The city was, during that year, made allowable for the Prophet [pbuh] to attack and conquer. It has never been allowable for anyone before the Prophet [pbuh] to attack the city.

Nor is not allowable for anyone after him. The Prophet [pbuh] has said: “and its sacredness was restored on the very day like that of yesterday.”[2]

Thus Allah’s act of swearing by this city is specific to the time when it was allowable for the Prophet [pbuh] during the year of Conquest. It was on that day that the city gained added honour. It was purified of the idols that day. Besides, the day marked the defeat of the polytheists. The city was conquered by force. After having been the land of disbelief, it turned into the land of Islam, faith. After a period of time in as a city of polytheism, it turned into the city of monotheism. After being the city of enemies it came to be the city of Islam. Thus the most blessed and exalted state and moment of the city of Makkah was when it was conquered by the Prophet [pbuh]. **By the begetter, and that (mā) he begot.** That is, I swear by the begetter and what he begot. Who is the begetter and the begotten referred to here?

One view is that the word begetter refers to Adam [pbuh] while the begotten refers to the children of Adam [pbuh]. In this sense the particle *mā* has been used in the stead of man, who. The implication would be: By the father and those whom he begot. The word *man* (who) is used for the intelligent beings. The word *mā* is used for the beings who don’t have consciousness like that of humans.

Another view is this: By the words “**the begetter, and that (mā) he begot**” is meant: Every begetter and every begotten. It would cover humans, animals and all. This is because the begetter and the begotten all are signs of Allah. How a child develops out of a drop of semen alive, seeing, hearing? This is a sign of perfection of Allah’s power. This balanced and fully proportioned child develops out of a drop of water. Allah says: “Has not man regarded how that We created him of a sperm-drop? Then lo, he is a manifest adversary.” (Q 36:77) The same applies to the insects and other creations which are born very weak. Then these creatures grow to the limit Allah has set for them. The sounder of the above is the latter view according to which the begetter and begotten in the verse refer to every begetter and every begotten.

Indeed (la qad), We created man in trouble (kabad). The particle L in the verse is used to indicate that this is the response of the oath. It is used to stress the sworn fact further. The particle *qad* also adds to the stress. Thus the sentence “indeed, We created man in trouble” has three stresses in it: the oath, the particle L and the particle *qad*. “We created man”. The word man in this sentence is generic. It covers every human being. “**In trouble, fi kabad.**” It gives two meanings:

The First Meaning: *fi kabad* means: perfection. He has been created in the perfect form of the creation. He is straight. He walks on two legs. He can raise his head. His body is duly proportioned. The animals, to the contrary, are not like that. Their head is as high at their back. As for humans their head is put on the top of the body. Allah says: “We indeed created Man in the fairest stature.” (Q 95:4).

Another view is that *kabad* in this verse means: suffering and facing difficulties in different matters. A man has to face problems and hardships in the affairs of his life including search for sustenance, taking care of the agricultural issues and the other matters. He has to put a great struggle against his self in order to force it to obey Allah and avoid disobedience of Allah. This is the war and struggle that is harder for him than the search for sustenance. This struggle grows in extent when a man is put to trial as he lives among the misguided and remains an alien among them. He finds the struggle to force his self even harder. He also has to deal with the people in such situation and it is hard.

If someone asks: Doesn't the verse imply both the meanings?

My response is this: Why not. Similarly, when you find a verse in the Book of Allah admitting of two meanings you have to consider both of them unless they are mutually contradictory. The Qur'an is comprehensive and very vast. If however, the two interpretations are contradictory and mutually exclusive then you have to conclude the more dominant one. Take for example the following saying of Allah Almighty: “Divorced women shall wait by themselves for *threequrū'*.” (Q 2:228). The word *qurū'* is plural of *qar'*. What does *qar'* mean? It has been held that it signifies menstrual cycles. Some said it refers to the purity period, when a woman is not having her periods. In this context one can't take both the meanings and ascribe them to the verse for they are mutually exclusive. Therefore, you have to see which of the two is the preferable and then take that meaning. Thus in the verse under discussion we say that the verse “**indeed (*la qad*), We created man in trouble (*kabad*)**” can be taken to imply both the meanings at the same time. That is, the word *kabad* may mean: beauty and perfection of human body and struggle a man faces to accomplish his major needs.

What, does he think none has power over him. That is, based on his power and ability, he thinks that he will not be overpowered by any as he is in his prime youth, has power, self confidence and arrogance. He says: None will be able to overpower me. I can do what I want. The following saying of Allah Almighty also alludes to this fact: “As for 'Ad, they waxed proud in the earth without right, and they said, 'Who is stronger than we in might?' [Allah Almighty said

in response:] What, did they not see that God, who created them, was stronger than they in might? (Q 41:15) Thus a man in his health and youth believes that none would be able to overpower him. He extends this challenge even to his Lord. He thinks that Allah too would not have power over him. This is true with regards to a disbeliever. A believer however knows that Allah has power over him. Allah has power over everything. Thus he fears His Allah.

Saying. That is, the man in this condition of self sufficiency and abundance of wealth says: '**I have consumed wealth abundant**'? That is, I have used a great wealth. This he says in spite of that he has used this for his personal desires. Allah Almighty says: **What, does he think none has seen him?** Does this man think that none has watched him spending the wealth carelessly and consuming it on useless heads? All this implies a warning to man against arrogance and haughtiness due to his physical might and financial stability?

Allah says: **Have We not appointed to him two eyes, and a tongue, and two lips?** These are the three most important blessings of Allah upon man. **Have We not appointed to him two eyes?** That is, the eyes which he sees. These two eyes communicate to the heart what man looks at and sees. If he watches something that is prohibited to watch he commits sins. To cast a glance that can lead one closer to Allah earns great good. If one looks at something that is *mubāḥ* to watch he is neither praised nor condemned for that action unless this act of looking at that particular thing leads to another prohibited act in which case it too would be prohibited.

And a tongue, and two lips. And a tongue with which he speaks and the two lips with which he regulates his speech. This is one of the greatest blessings of Allah. Due this tongue and these lips one is able to give expression to what is in his heart. If these three things were not granted to man he would not be able to do that. If man were not able to speak how could he express himself? How would others know what he thinks? The only exception is the sign language but this makes him tired and put the others in trouble as well. However, it is one of the great blessings of Allah that He has granted man a tongue to speak and two lips to regulate the speech. This is one of the blessings of Allah. It is also the most wonderful creation of His. Speech comes from the air which issues from lungs and goes through specific places. If it hits one part it gives a linguistic sound. When it passes another place it gives another sound. This is in spite of the fact that the air is the same issuing from the same origin. But it moves through the very subtle and fine hairs in the throat, and then two lips. It is in these hairs that these linguistic sounds are pronounced. For you see for example that F and SH are articulated due to the air that come out of the lungs however they differ only because they pass

through different parts of the mouth and the known organs of articulation. All this evidences on the power of Allah.

And guided him on the two highways? It has been said that it means: We explained for him the path of good and evil. Another view is that “**guided him on the two highways**” means: We guided him to where he could get food; that is, breasts. For these two are uplands as they protrude from the chest. Thus Allah guided man while he is a suckling child, just born. He searches for the breasts of his mother. Who has told this to him? Allah Almighty. Thus the Almighty counts His favor upon man which He showered upon him when he is born. He goes out to the two breasts. Previously, being in the womb of his mother, he was fed through tube. At that time he is unable to feed on anything else. If he fed through his mouth he would need to defecate and urinate. How can that be possible? But through the tube he gets the blood from his mother and it spreads in his circulatory system till the time Allah allows that he is born.

Verses 11-20

Yet he has not assaulted the steep. That is, the man who says “I have consumed wealth abundant” has “not yet **assaulted the steep.**” “**Yet he has not assaulted the steep**” means: Has he not mounted the steep? *al-iqtiḥām* means: passing and crossing something with effort. *al-‘Aqabah* refers to a path in the barren mountain. There is no doubt in that to pass such a path is difficult for men. It is only the ones who have true intention to cross the upland who can pass it. It is rare.

And what shall teach you what is the steep? This is rhetorical question brought to create passion and encouragement as well as expression of gravity of the matter. The implication is: What can reveal to you the nature of the highland about which Allah has said: **Yet he has not assaulted the steep.** The Almighty then explained it in the following words: **The freeing of a slave, or giving food upon a day of hunger to an orphan near of kin or a needy man in misery; then that he become of those who believe.** The words: *fakku raqabah* (freeing of a slave) is subject (*mubtada*) whose predicate (*khabar*) has been left unstated. The whole sentence would be discovered as follows: *hiya fakku raqabah*, it is to free a slave. The expression *fakku raqabah* has two meanings:

First, freeing it from slavery; a man frees a slave regardless of the matter they are in his ownership or are in the possession of others and he buys and frees them.

Second, freeing someone from among the prisoners. Freeing a prisoner is the most beloved act in the sight of Allah Almighty. At times an enemy does not free the captives without receiving money in ransom. At times this ransom is so high that only the people blessed with abundant faith can have courage to spend money for the purpose. Thus he spends on this head knowing that Allah will give him more than what he spends and will reward him for the charity.

Or giving food upon a day of hunger (*dhī masghabah*). Or. This “or” serves to give the option of kinds. The implication is: It is either feeding someone at the day of hunger. *dhī masghabah*. That is, a day of severe hunger. The people at times are faced with severe hunger either because of the shortage in the fruits and the grain or due to the disease a man suffers. A man eats but does not feel satisfaction. This happens in the Nejd and other areas as we hear. Man eats but does not feel fulfilled. A man eats food of ten men but still feels hungry. They die in the markets falling down due to extreme hunger. This is due to hunger. The other cause is the dearth of fruits and grain. Trees don't give fruit. Crops don't yield produce. Thus the commodities fall short and people die of hunger. At times they migrate from their countries.

Yatīm, orphan is someone whose father dies before he enters mature age. This applies both to males and females. If an orphan reaches mature age he or she is no more called orphan. He has entered adult age and separates from his parents. Similarly, if someone's mother dies he is not called orphan contrary to some of the common people's thinking. They say that an orphan is the one whose mother dies. This is not sound. Thus an orphan is the one whose father has died. When his father dies there remain no one who can earn livelihood for him.

The words: **near of kin (*maqrabah*).** *dhā maqrabah* means: near of kin. An orphan has the right upon us and we need to share with him charity and respect him. But when such an orphan is our near relation he has the right to join ties with him. Thus if a person combines these two states--he is orphan and is also a near relative--then spending on him is a great deed called mounting the steep especially when there is a day of extreme hunger. **Or a needy man in misery (*matrabah*).** *miskīn* is the one who lacks food for himself and his family. *matrabah* means: lying at the stead of dust. The implication is that he is destitute who has nothing but dust. This means that he is extremely poor. He has no food no shelter. He has no wealth. Thus he is a needy man in misery.

Then that he become of those who believe and counsel each other to be steadfast, and counsel each other to be merciful. That is, he is not only kind to the orphans and the poor. Rather he is a believer also. He believes in

everything we are required to believe in. In his response to the Angel Jibrīl, the Prophet [pbuh] has explained what we need to believe in. He said: “*īmānis* that you believe in Allah, His angels, His books, Messengers, the Last Day and the divine decree, good and bad.”[3] His words: ***wa tawāṣaw bi al-ṣabr, and counsel each other to be steadfast.*** That is, they counsel each other to be firm and steadfast. There are three types of steadfastness, *ṣabr*: steadfastness in obeying Allah, in avoiding his disobedience, and in the unpleasant conditions decreed by Allah. Thus these are the steadfast. They ask each other to be steadfast in all these three senses: steadfastness in obeying Allah, in avoiding his disobedience, and in the unpleasant conditions decreed by Allah.

Each and every Messenger of Allah observed all these three types of steadfastness and perseverance together. The same was the status of their followers. Here is the Messenger [pbuh]. He steadfastly obeys Allah. He fights in the path of Allah. He calls others to Him. He is transgressed against and persecuted for that. The polytheists even planned to assassinate him. In the spite of all this he remained patient. The Messenger is also persevering in his commitment to avoid disobedience of Allah. It is impossible that he cheats anyone, or speaks lies to anyone, or commits dishonesty against anyone. He is also the one who fears Allah to the best of his power. He is also pleased with the divine decrees about his life circumstances. How much he has been persecuted due to his obedience to Allah. Didn't the disbelievers chastise him when they saw him prostrating in Ka'bah? They called someone to bring the entrails of a camel which they put on his back while he was in prostration.[4] In spite of all this he remained steadfast.

The Messenger Yūsuf [pbuh] was also pleased with his destiny in spite of hardships. He was put in a well in the forest. He was also chastised through captivity. In spite of that he remained steadfast. He did not cry and condemn what was being done to him. The words: ***and counsel each other to be merciful.*** That is, they counselled each other to show mercy to others. Man can be merciful to the animals and to men. He is merciful to his father, mother, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and others. Similarly, he shows mercy to all the human beings. He is also kind to the animals like his camels, horses, donkeys, cows, goats and others. The Prophet [pbuh] said: “Show mercy to those on the earth; the One in the heavens will be merciful to you.”[5]

Those are. That is, the people characterized by the qualities mentioned are **the Companions of the Right Hand (*maymanah*)**. That is, of the Right Hand, the ones who will be given their account register in their right hands. The ones who will receive their registers in their right hands will be subjected to light accountability. They will return to their family members well pleased and

happy. Then Allah says: **And those who disbelieve in Our signs**, that is, who reject the signs, **they (hum) are the Companions of the Left Hand**. The pronoun hum in the sentence has been brought to stress the point. If one says: *wallidhī kafarū bi āyāti nā aṣḥāb al-mash'amah*, that would be correct. But this hum has been introduced in order to lay stress.

al-mash'amah. That is the left side. It may also mean: bad omen. **Over them is a Fire covered down**. That is, fire shall be put over them covering them over. They will not be able to get out of it. They will have no way for an escape. We ask Allah to include us among those who believe, do the righteous deeds, counsel each other of patience and counsel each other of mercilessness; indeed He is the One who listens and accepts our prayers.

[1] The reference has already passed. See page 125.

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 1832, Book of Penalty of Hunting while on Pilgrimage, Chapter: It is not permissible to cut the trees of the Ḥaram; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1354 (446), Book of Pilgrimage, Chapter: Sanctity of Makkah.

[3] The reference has already been given: page 56.

[4] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 3854, Book of Virtues of Ansār, Chapter: The persecution faced by the Prophet [pbuh] and his Companions at the hands of the polytheists of Makkah; Sahih of Muslim, No: 1794, Book of Jihad and Sirah, Chapter: The persecution faced by the Prophet [pbuh] at the hands of the polytheists and the hypocrites.

[5] Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, No: 1924, Book of Joining Ties and Good Treatment, Chapter: What has been said about showing mercy to the people. al-Tirmidhī said: This is a ḥasan and Ṣaḥīḥ Hadith.

Sūrah al-Shams: 91

Verses 1-10

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The verse *basmalah* has already been explained.

By the sun and his morning brightness. Allah Almighty has sworn by the sun and its brightness because it contains great signs of Allah which lead to His perfect power, consummate knowledge and unending mercy. This sun has in it signs which are not clearly known to some people. How many people on the earth save energy when the sun appears? Millions of millions. They no longer need electricity due to the sunlight. How much energy the earth gains from the sun? The fruits ripen, the trees grow and many other things get benefits which nobody but Allah knows. The benefits gained from the sun energy can't be counted. Most of these issues relate to the discipline of cosmology and geology. To sum up all these are the great signs of Allah related to the sun and its light.

And by the moon when she follows him. It has been held that the implication is: when the moon follows the sun in its movement. Another view is that it means: When the moon follows the sun in its illumination. The verses can give different possible meanings. The principle of *tafsīr* in this regards is that when a verse is subject to two different possible meanings which don't contradict each other then both the meanings should be accepted. Taking both such meanings is to take vaster meanings. So we say that the sentence "When the moon follows the sun in its movement" means that the moon comes later than the sun every day. During the first part of the month the moon comes just after the sunset and it is in the western horizon. During the middle of the month it is farthest off towards the east. This is because every day its distance from the western horizon increases. When we say: "the moon follows the sun in its illumination" we mean: When the sun disappears the moon starts giving light especially during the second quarter and the third quarter of the lunar month. In that period, the light of the moon is clearer. That is, from the eighth day to the twenty-first day of the lunar month, the light of the moon is brighter. During the first seven days and the last seven days its light is very weak. In every case the light of the moon appears after the light of the sun. This is apparent. So the Almighty has sworn the oath by the sun as it is a sign of the day and by the moon because it is the sign that appears at night.

And by the day when it displays him and by the night when it enshrouds him. These two entities are opposites juxtaposing each other. **The day when it**

displays him, that is, when the sun makes the earth clear and observable. The day is called *nahār* because during the day things are clear and observable. **And by the night when it enshrouds him**. That is, when the night covers the earth as it works as a covering put over something. This seems to be very clear depiction of the phenomenon when you are flying in a plane and you see the earth as a black surface under you. You can see the sun as you are high above the earth. But the earth below you after the sunset is like a black surface like something covered with a black covering. This is the meaning of the words: **and by the night when it enshrouds him**.

By the heaven and that which (mā) built it (banā hā) and by the earth. The heaven and the earth are opposites. The words: **By the heaven and that which (mā) built it**. The exegetes have said: The particle *mā* in this verse *ismaḍdariyah*, that is, it converts the meaning of the verb governed by it into noun. The meaning would thus be: By the heaven and its built, make. This is because the heaven is a creation of great magnitude. Its greatness is evidenced by its height, vastness and power as well as other signs put in it by Allah. Similarly its make is firm. Allah says: “You don’t in the creation of the All-merciful any imperfection. Return your gaze; do you see any fissure? Then return thy gaze again, and again, and your gaze comes back to you dazzled, aweary.” (Q 76:3-4)

And by the earth and That which extended it! That is, the earth and that which extends it till that it became spread out, very soft, not very hard. Rather it is in the form that suits to the creations of the world and fulfils their needs. This is one of the blessings of Allah upon His servants that He made the earth something between soft and hard except in a few places. But this minor part is not enough that we can characterise the earth by the qualities of the lesser insignificant qualities. **By the soul (nafs), and That which shaped it**. Though the word *nafs* is singular in this verse yet it is used to describe genre. It covers all and every *nafs*. **And that which shaped it**. That is, he shaped its physical form and nature. Its form is well proportioned because Allah has created everything according to its own person and its circumstances. Allah says: “Our Lord is He who gave everything its creation, (that is, gave it form that matches its requirements) then guided it.” (Q 20:55) That is, He guided it to what is beneficial for it. This is how Allah proportioned the form of the creations. This is especially true of the humans. Allah has made purity and monotheism their nature. Allah Almighty says: “So set your face to the religion, a man of pure faith -- God's original upon which He originated mankind.” (Q 30:30)

And inspired it (*fā alhama hā*). That is, Allah Almighty inspired these souls, sinfulness (*fujūr*) and God-consciousness (*taqwā*). Allah has mentioned *fujūr* before *taqwā* even though the latter is undoubtedly more

excellent and virtuous. The scholars have said that it is in order to match the ending rhyme. *fujūrahā wa taqwā hā*, its evil and *taqwā*. *Fujūr* implies things that are opposite to *taqwā*. *Taqwā* is to obey Allah. Thus *fujūr* implies disobedience of Allah. Every sinner is *fājir*, the one who commits *fujūr*. This is in spite of the fact that the word *fājir* is conventionally applied to the unchaste persons. However, in Sharī'ah parlance the word covers all those who run free of the folds of obedience to Allah. Allah Almighty says: "No indeed; the Book of the libertines (*al-fujjār*) is in *Sijjīn*." (Q 83:7) The word *al-fujjār* (singular *fājir*) in this verse refers to the disbelievers. Inspiration of *taqwā* to the soul is to make it accord to the *fiṭrah*, human nature, orientation. *Fujūr* lies outside *fiṭrah*. Allah inspires it to some of the souls because they deviate from the right course. The Almighty Allah says: "When they swerved, God caused their hearts to swerve." (Q 61:5) Allah does not do injustice to anyone. However, when He knows that someone does not intend to find and follow the truth, He makes his heart to swerve.

Prosperous is he (*qad aflaha*) who purifies it (*man zakkā hā*). *Qad aflaha* means: He obtains his objective and gains salvation from what should be feared. *Man zakkā hā* means: The person who purifies his soul. It does not imply the *tazkiyah* that is prohibited by Allah in his command: "Therefore hold not yourselves purified (Q 53:32)", that is, to profess to be pure. By *tazkiyah* in this verse is meant that one should purify oneself from polytheism and sins so that one grows pure, purified and clear.

And failed has he who seduces it. That is, the one who puts his soul in destructions and sins. This makes it incumbent upon us to pray to Allah Almighty to make one firm in His obedience. One should also pray for that Allah makes him firmly follow the truth, stick to the firm statement, in this life and the one to come. You should therefore, always keep beseeching Allah perseverance, beneficial knowledge, and righteous deeds. Allah Almighty says: "And when My servants question you concerning Me -- I am near to answer the call of the caller, when he calls to Me; so let them respond to Me, and let them believe in Me; haply so they will go aright." (Q 2:186)

Verses 11-15

Thamood cried lies in their insolence. Thamūd cried lies. Thamūd is the name of a tribe. Their prophet was Ṣāliḥ [pbuh]. They lived in Hijr which lies on the highway road. These people rejected their Prophet Ṣāliḥ [pbuh]. Their Prophet [pbuh] like all other Prophets of God called them to worship only Allah as He says: "And We sent never a Messenger before thee except that We revealed to him, saying, 'There is no god but I; so serve Me.'" (Q 21:25) He called them to worship Allah alone, who has no partner. Allah granted him a sign which

established veracity of his claim to Prophethood. It was a she-camel which would drink water from a well one day and give those people milk the second day. A scholar has said: Whenever a man would approach it and give it water she would give him milk of the same measure. However, the Qur'an negates this viewpoint. It says: "to her a draught and to you a draught, on a day appointed." (Q 26:155) Thus the she-camel would drink water from the well one day and give milk the other day. However, this sign did not help those people.

"Thamood cried lies in their insolence (bi taghwāb hā)." That is, due to their transgression and disobedience. The particle B in the words *bi taghwāb hā* gives the sense of causation. That is, due to their being transgressors they belied the Messenger. **"When the most wretched of them uprose."** This explains the transgression which the Almighty Allah mentioned. The implication is that the transgression materialized when the most wretched of them rose. *imba'atha*, means: He rose quickly. *ashqā hā*: the most wretched man among Thamūd. The most prominent criminal among them. May Allah save us! He rose intending to do away with the she-camel. Their Messenger, Ṣāliḥ [pbuh], said to them: **"The She-camel of God; let her drink."** That is, leave the she-camel alone. This interpretation is based on the following saying of Allah Almighty: "Leave her eat on the earth of Allah." (Q 7:73) That is, leave her alone. Don't kill her. Don't approach her with evil intention. However, the result was exactly the opposite of that. **"They cried him lies."** That is, they belied Thamūd [pbuh]. They said: You are not a Messenger. Similarly, the nations of all the Messengers of God ascribe shortcomings to them. Allah Almighty says: "Even so not a Messenger came to those before them but they said, 'A sorcerer, or a man possessed!'" (Q 51:52)

Every Messenger was declared either sorcerer or possessed. The same did they say to the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]: You are a sorcerer, liar, possessed, poet, and soothsayer. However, the bad epithets the enemies devise and label against the friends of Allah don't harm the intended victims. Rather these cause a raise in the status of the friends of Allah in His sight. If the friends of Allah expect reward from him on that they will be rewarded. So Allah Almighty says: **"and hamstrung her."** That is, they slaughtered the she-camel by hamstringing it which resulted in its death. **"So their Lord crushed."** That is, He upturned the earth upon them and destroyed them all. It is just as you say: *damdamtu al-bi'ra*: I put soil on the well. **"For their sin."** That is, because of their sins. Allah Almighty does not do injustice to the people. He does not do injustice in the least. However, it is the people who transgress. Thus the sins are a cause of destruction, annihilation and eradication of the doer. This conclusion is based on the following saying of Allah Almighty: "Corruption has appeared in the land and sea, for that men's own hands have earned, that He

may let them taste some part of that which they have done, that haply so they may return.” (Q 30:41) Allah also says: “And when We desire to destroy a city, We command its men who live at ease, and they commit ungodliness therein, then the Word is realized against it, and We destroy it utterly.” (Q 17:16) The Almighty addresses the noblest of all mankind and the best of the generation in the following words: “Why, when an affliction visited you, and you had visited twice over the like of it, did you say, 'How is this?' Say: 'This is from your own selves.’”(Q 3:165)

Thus whatever evil strikes a man is due to his own doing. This is why Allah says: “**So their Lord crushed them for their sin.**” That is, because of their sins. “**and levelled them.**” That is, He sent the punishment on all and sundry. None was spared and none survived. They were left lying on their settlements. “**And He fears not the issue thereof.**” That is, Allah does not care about the final destination of these people He punished. Nor does He fear those who follow these criminals. The reason is the ultimate authority and rule is His. He has everything in His hand contrary to the status of the kings of this world who even after gaining victory over others or punishing someone continue fearing a backlash. As for Allah, He does not fear the consequence of any such thing. He does not care about the people He punishes and chastises because the ultimate authority is His, all praise is due to Him alone. Exalted is the pure Lord; His rule and power is extraordinary.

Sūrah al-Layl: 92

Verses 1-11

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The verse *basmalah* has already been explained.

By the night enshrouding (yaghshā). Allah Almighty has sworn an oath by the night when it enshrouds the earth and envelops it with its darkness. The word *ghishā'* (verbal noun of the verb *yaghshā*) means covering. **And the day in splendour.** That is, the day appears and grows distinct. This happens at the time of dawn marked by the light on the sky heralding the sunrise. The sun is the sign of the day just as the moon is the sign of the night. **And that which created the male and the female.** That is, and creating the male and the female (*mā khalaq* is used to imply *khalqi hā*, its creation). This is one of the two explanations of the particle *mā*. According to this view the particle *mā* is *maṣḍariyah*. According to the other view the implication is: And by the one who created the male and female. He is Allah Almighty. Thus according to the first view: Allah has sworn by (the act of) creating the male and the female. According to the second view Allah has sworn the oath by himself as it is He who has created the male and the female. **Surely your striving (that is, your actions and deeds) is to diverse ends,** that is, your striving is immensely diverse.

Thus Allah Almighty swore the oath by the different opposite things to affirm certain other opposites. Male is opposite to the female. Some strivings are opposite to others as the pious and righteous one is opposite to the evil one. Thus an affinity has appeared in the elements/subject of the oath and the fact sworn. This shows the nuanced style of the Holy Qur'an. The meaning therefore is: Difference between the night and the day as well as the male and the female is apparent. Similarly, the actions and deeds of servants of Allah are different and distinct from each other; some of them are pious and some evil, some of them are a mixture of the pious and the impious. All this is due to the power of Allah. Allah guides the one whom He wills to the straight path. Then the Almighty has further explicated this divergent striving: He says:

As for him who gives (away), fears and confirms the reward most fair. “As for him who gives.” that is, he gave away what he has been commanded to give including for example wealth, status or knowledge. **“And he fears(wattaqā)”**. That is, he fears committing what Allah has prohibited him. **And confirms the most beautiful.** That is, he affirms the veracity of the most beautiful statements, that is, the words of Allah and the Prophet [pbuh] and that the

most truthful and the most beautiful speech is that of Allah Almighty. **We shall surely ease him (fa sa nuyassiru hū) to the Easing.** The S preceding the verb *nuyassiru* gives the meaning of stress and reaffirmation. The implication is: The one who gives away (what is required of him to give), fears committing the prohibitions, and confirms the statements (of the Almighty and the Messenger) will have all his matters eased for him. This includes all the worldly and after worldly matters. This is why you see that the person who fears God finds his works easily done. The same happens to the person who gives what he is commanded to give and affirms the most truthful statement. As a person grows in his fear of Allah his matters and works become easier for him accordingly. Allah Almighty says:

“And whosoever fears God, He will appoint for him a way out.” (Q 65:4) Just as a man moves away from Allah he finds his affairs harder for him and more difficult. This is why Allah says: “**But as for him who is a miser, (and does not give what Allah has commanded him to give) and self-sufficient (so he feels himself not in need of Allah, does not fear Him and believes he is no in need of Allah’s mercy), and cries lies to the reward most fair.** That is, he belies the truest and the most beautiful statement which is the statement of Allah Almighty and His Messenger [pbuh]. **We shall surely ease him to the Hardship.** He is offered difficulty in all his matters. However, Satan approaches a man and says to him: “We see that the disbelievers are in ease today! Why is that?” One should say: Yes. Their matters are easy for them. However, their hearts burn in fire and are troubled as Allah Almighty says: “whomsoever He desires to lead astray, He makes his breast narrow, tight, as if he were climbing to heaven.” (Q 6:125) Moreover, their blessings are only material, giving comfort to their bodies. It is not the blessings and pleasures of the soul. Similarly, it is a source of punishment for them. Allah says: “We will draw them on little by little whence they know not; and I shall respite them -- assuredly My guile is sure.” (68:44-45) The Prophet [pbuh] said: “Allah Almighty continues giving respite to the transgressors till the time He holds him in grasp and he can’t escape.”[1] The Prophet [pbuh] then recited the divine saying: “Such is the seizing of your Lord, when He seizes the cities that are evildoing; surely His seizing is painful, terrible.” (Q 11:102) Thus these disbelievers have been given the good things in their worldly life. This worldly life is jannah for them in relation to the Afterlife.

The scholars have reported an anecdote about Ibn Hajar Asqalānī, the author of *Fath al-Bārī*, a commentary on the Sahih of al-Bukhari. He was the chief Qadi in Egypt. One day he passed by a Jew who traded in oil and butter. Ibn Hajar was riding a cart pulled by mules. He was surrounded by people. We know that the clothes of a person who sells oils and butter etc are often dirty. The state of such a person is bad. This Jew made the cart stop of Ibn Hajar stop and said

to him: Your Prophet says: “The world is the prison for a believer and jannah for a disbeliever.”[2] Then why is that your condition is that (good) and mine is that (bad)? Ibn Hajar retorted extempore: I am in a prison as compared to what the Almighty has put in store of the blessings of the jannah for the believers. The world is nothing as compared to the after world as the Prophet [pbuh] said: “Handgrip of a sword in the Hereafter is better than the world and everything in it.”[3] As for you, O Jew, you are really in a paradise as compared to the punishment lying in store for you if you died as a disbeliever. This sufficed for that Jews as reminder and it became a cause of his acceptance of Islam. He declared: “I declare that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad [pbuh] is the Messenger of Allah.”

Then the Almighty says: **his wealth shall not avail him when he perishes**. That is, what good would his wealth do to him if he behaved stingily? *Tadaraddā* means: perishes. Then what good does the wealth do? It does not help.

Verses 12-21

Surely upon Us rests the guidance. This implies that it is upon Allah to provide and explain to His creations guidance to the right course. The guidance mentioned in this verse means: to present and explain. The Almighty has imposed it upon Himself to explain the truths so that the people are not left with an excuse to reject Him and His Message. This has been stated in the following saying of Allah Almighty: “We have revealed to you as We revealed to Noah, and the Prophets after him [...] Messengers bearing good tidings, and warning, so that mankind might have no argument against God, after the Messengers.” (Q 4:163-5) Thus it is not possible for human reason to independently find the guidance. Therefore, Allah has taken it upon Himself to explain the guidance to man needed by him. “**Surely upon Us rests the guidance (*hudā*).**” We need to appreciate that the word *hudā* guidance has two senses:

First, guidance to grant of capability (*tawfīq*). None but Allah has the power to grant this.

Second, guidance in the sense of indication and pointing out the intended facts. This can be obtained from Allah and also from mankind: the Messengers [pbut] and the scholars.

The Almighty said to his Messenger Muhammad [pbuh]: “You only show (to the people) the way to the right path.” (Q 42:52) As for the first type of the guidance (*hudā al-tawfīq*), that lies only in the power of Allah. None other than

Him has the power to grant someone the capability to do good. Allah says: “You don’t guides whom you like, but God guides whom He wills, and knows very well those that are guided.” (Q 28:56) If we ponder over the verse under discussion “**Surely upon Us rests the guidance**” we learn that Allah has explained everything regarding the obligatory beliefs, worships, ethics, dealings, and prohibitions about all these issues. Abū Dharr [rta] said: “The Messenger of Allah departed this world (only after) we were given knowledge even about every bird which flaps his wings in the atmosphere.”[4]

A polytheist said to Salmān al-Fārisī [rta]: “Your Apostle (may peace be upon him) teaches you about everything, even about excrement.” He replied: “Yes. Even about excrement”[5] He meant to say: Yes. He has taught us the manners and etiquettes of relieving oneself. The Prophet [pbuh] taught his ummah even this. This is corroborated by the following statement of the Qur’an: “Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam for your religion.” (Q 5:3). **And to Us belong the Last and the First.** That is, the last and the first belong to Us. The first, that is, the world, precedes the hereafter in time. However, in the last part of this verse, where the Hereafter has been mentioned before the Herein, there are two other points of great importance and benefit:

The first point of ponder relates to the meaning.
The second point relates to the expression.

The first point is that the Hereafter is more important than this world and that in the Hereafter the rule of the Almighty Allah will express itself fully. In this world there are other leaders and rulers. These people own authority which Allah gave them. However, in the after world none will have any authority. Allah says: “'Whose is' the Kingdom today?' 'God's, the One, the Omnipotent.” (Q 40:16) This is the meaning due to which Allah has mentioned the Hereafter before the Herein.

The second important point considered in this ordering of the words relates to expression. This order has been adopted in consideration of the verse ending rhymes. The verses end with Alif. (So does this one).

Allah Almighty has said: “**Surely upon Us (*‘alaynā*) rests the guidance, and to Us belong (*ilaynā*) the Last and the First.**” If someone asks why has He used two different constructions? What is the difference between the two?

Our response to this question would be this: The difference lies in that Allah has taken it upon himself to guide the creations and explain the guidance to them. As for the authority that is for Allah in this world as well as in the

Hereafter. This is why He said: “and to Us belong the Last and the First.” Subsequently, Allah says: “**Now I have warned you (*andhartu kum*) of a Fire that flames (*Talazzā*).**” *Andhartu kum* means: I have frightened you, warned you of Fire of Hell. *Talazzā* means: (The fire) which flames. There are many qualities of the Fire of Hell as stated in the Qur’an and the Hadith. **Whereat none but the most wretched (*ashqā*) shall be roasted (*yaṣlā hā*).** *lā yaṣlā hā* means: He does not meet it and is roasted in it. *Ilī al-ashqā* means: The one who has been destined to be wretched (*shaqāwah*). *al-shaqāwah* is opposite of *sa’ādah*, blessedness. It is clear from the following saying of Allah Almighty: As for the wretched (*shaqaw*), they shall be in the Fire. (Q 11:106) He also said: “And as for the happy (*su’idū*), they shall be in Paradise.” (Q 11:108). Thus by *al-ashqā* in the verse is meant: The one who has not been decreed blessedness. This is the one who shall meet the fire that flames. Then the Almighty explains this further by saying: **he who cried lies, and turned away.** The rejection and belying (*takdhīb*) is done in response to the news (brought by the Prophets). Turning away (*tawallī*) is committed in response to the commands and prohibitions. Thus this wretched man belies the news of the Messengers and does not believe in it. He is told: You shall be raised to life. He says: I will not be resurrected. When he is told: There will be Paradise and Hell in the after world. He says: There is nothing like Paradise and Hell. He is told: Such and such shall happen. He says: There will be no such thing. This is belying and rejection. *Tawallā* means: He turns away from obedience to Allah. He also disregards the message of the Messengers of Allah. Such a man therefore is the wretched one.

(He) shall be removed. That is, he shall be able to avoid this Fire that flames. *Al-atqā*: It is a superlative degree of adjective derived from the noun *taqwā*. The meaning is: The one who fears God the way He should be feared. **He who gives his wealth to purify himself.** That is, he spends his wealth to the deserving in order to get purified. Allah Almighty says in the Qur’an: “Take of their wealth a freewill offering, to purify them and to cleanse them thereby, and pray for them; thy prayers are a comfort for them.” (Q 9:103) Thus the divine words: “**He who gives his wealth to purify himself**” implies that he does not spend like a spendthrift nor does he behave stingily. He gives his wealth in order to get purified. This is done as Allah has explained in Surah al-Furqān: “Those who, when they expend, are neither prodigal nor parsimonious, but between that is a just stand.” (Q 25:67)

We see that some people whom Allah grants wealth are stingy. They become parsimonious not spending even on their spouses, children, and near ones; an expense they are obliged to make. We also see that there some other men whom Allah has granted lesser and they are in financial hardship. But they go from person to person borrowing money to build their house in competition

with the well off. The might also want to buy an expensive car like someone they want to match. Both these attitudes are wrong. The first attitude implies falling short of the limit set for us and the second is to be spendthrift. It is obligatory upon a man to spend according to his true circumstances.

If someone asks us: Is it allowable for one to borrow money in order to spend in charity?

Our response to this follows: No. He must not. The reason is that charity is optional good. To be bound in loan is a great a danger. Loan is not an easy matter. If a man dies while he is under debt his soul remains attached to his loan until it is paid. Many heirs don't consider paying the debt of their dear one departed. They continue delaying it and mostly would not pay it. We know that the Messenger of Allah would ask about the status of the deceased if he was asked to offer a funeral. He would ask: Is he obliged to pay some debt? (If he was told that he was burdened with loan, he would ask): Does he have something to pay it? If the people told the Prophet that [pbuh] that the man had debt to clear and did not have anything to pay it then he would command the Companions: Pray the funeral of your friend.[6] He would not offer he funeral prayer of such a man. The Messenger of Allah has also informed us that martyrdom in the way of Allah works as expiation for everything except for debt one owes to someone.[7] Thus debt is a grave matter. One should not take it that easy.

Then the Almighty says: **and confers no favour on any man for recompense.** That is, he does not give his wealth in order to balance a previous favour received. Thus he is not under a favour from someone so that he should spend in order to pay back the favour. On the contrary he spends seeking the pleasure of Allah. This is why Allah has said: **only seeking the Face of his Lord the Most High.** Thus this man does not spend the wealth except seeking the pleasure of Allah, that is, seeking entry into the house where Allah will honour him. It is the house where He shall also see the countenance of Allah.

And he shall surely be satisfied. That is, Allah shall soon grant him the abundant reward. This reward has been explained by Allah in the following words: "The likeness of those who expend their wealth in the way of God is as the likeness of a grain of corn that sprouts seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. So God multiplies unto whom He will; God is All-embracing, All-knowing." (Q 2:261) We ask Allah to count us among these pious, pure and honourable men. Indeed He has power over everything.

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- [1] Reference to this narrative has passed. See page: 137.
- [2] Sahih of Imam Muslim, No: 2956 (1), Book of *Zuhd*, Chapter: The world is a prison for the believer and a jannah for a disbelieer.
- [3] Reference to this hadith has already passed: See page: 205.
- [4] Musnad of Imam Ahmad, 5:153.
- [5] Sahih of Imam Muslim, No: 262/57, Book of Purification, Chapter: Etiquettes of Revelieving oneself.
- [6] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 2290, Book of Kafālah, Chapter: The one who took the responsibility of payment of debt due to a deceased; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1619 (14), Book of Rules of Inheritance, Chapter: Whoever leaves wealth it goes to his heirs.
- [7] Sahih of Muslim, No: 1885 (117), Book of Government, Chapter: One Who Is Killed In The Way Of Allah Will Have All His Sins Blotted Out Except Debt.

Sūrah al-Ḍuḥā: 93

Verses 1-11

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The verse *basmalah* has already been explained.

By the white forenoon (*wa al-ḍuḥā*). *Al-ḍuḥā* signifies the early part of the day. It has light and illumination. **And the brooding (*sajā*) night.** That is, by the night when it covers the earth and extends upon it its darkness. Thus Allah has sworn an oath by two distinct things: The first is the early day when it fills the earth with light and illumination. The second object of oath is the night when it sets in and it has darkness. **You Lord has neither forsaken you.** That is, He has not abandoned you and has not stopped caring about you. **Nor hate you.** That is, He does not dislike you. Rather according out knowledge the Prophet [pbuh] was the dearest to Allah of all the creation. This is why He chose the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] for the greatest of all the Messages. He appointed him for the best of all the nations and made him the last of the Prophets. So there is no Prophet after the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. The Prophet [pbuh] was one of the two humans who have been given the exclusive title of *khalīl*, the friend by Allah. *Khallah* is the highest form of love. We don't know of anyone among the *khalīls* of Allah except the Prophet Ibrahim [pbuh] and the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh].

The Prophet [pbuh] said: “Indeed Allah Almighty took me as a *khalīl* just as He made Ibrahim [pbuh] his *khalīl*.”[1]The Almighty Allah [pbuh] says to His Prophet [pbuh]: “And be patient under the judgment of your Lord; surely thou you before Our eyes.”(Q 52:48) ‘The eyes of Allah’ implies that He is guarding over him and protecting him. The Prophet [pbuh] is the one to whom Allah says: “Who sees you when you stand and when thou turns about among those who bow.” (26:219) Thus Allah did not abandon the Prophet [pbuh] rather He covered him in His knowledge, mercy, protection and other ways as required by raising his status in the world and the Hereafter. This goes in accord with Allah says in the next surah: “Did We not exalt your fame?” (Q 94:4)

And the Last (*ākhirah*) shall be better for you than the First. This sentence has been stressed by the particle *L* put in the beginning. It is called *L* of initiation. *Al-ākhirah* refers to the day when the people shall be resurrected. They will then be brought to their final destination; *jannah* or Hell. Allah says to His Messenger:

“And the Last shall be better for you than the First.” That is, the hereafter is better for you than the herein. The hereafter is better because it has blessings not seen by any eye nor heard by any ear or thought of by any human mind. The handgrip of one’s sword in the afterlife is better than everything in this world as has been said by the Prophet [pbuh].[2] This is why when during his last illness the Prophet [pbuh] was given the option to choose between the life of this world and the life in the presence of Allah, he chose what is with Allah. He also declared in his sermon while he was on the pulpit: “Allah has given one of His Slaves the choice of receiving the splendour and luxury of the worldly life whatever he likes or to accept the good (of the Hereafter) which is with Allah. So he has chosen that good which is with Allah.” On that Abu Bakr wept. The people became astonished at this. “Look at this man! How he cries?” the people said. Abū Bakr [rta] knew the Prophet [pbuh] more than any other human being. He knew that the person given the choice was none other than the Messenger of Allah himself. He also knew that the Prophet [pbuh] opted for the Afterlife which is in the presence of Allah. He concluded that it was a declaration of the fact that the Prophet’s life was about to end.[3]

Your Lord shall give you soon (*wa la sawfa*), and you shall be satisfied. *wa la sawfa*, contains the particle L which is also used for stress. It may also give the sense of an oath. *sawfa* leads to the implication that the matter revealed shall happen soon but after a while. **Your Lord shall give you.** That is, He shall grant you what shall please you. Then you shall be well pleased. The Almighty granted the Prophet [pbuh] what pleased him. Allah shall raise the Prophet [pbuh] on the Last Day to the praiseworthy station. He will be praised by the earliest and the latest people. Even the greatest Messengers of God can’t reach the station where the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] would reach. On the Day of Judgment, the people will face pain and sorrow. They will be in difficulty. Some of them will go to others and ask to find someone who could intercede for them before the Almighty. They will go to Adam [pbuh], then to Noah [pbuh], then to Ibrahim [pbuh], then to Moses [pbuh], and then to Jesus [pbuh]. All these four major prophets will seek excuse from trying this intercession. They people will then go the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. He will stand up and intercede for them.[4] There is no doubt in that this is a great blessing. None other than the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] has achieved it.

Allah then recounts to the Prophet [pbuh] his blessings that He showed upon him already so that he could be reassured of the future blessings. Allah says: **Did He not find you an orphan, and shelter you?** This is a rhetorical question implying affirmation. The implication is this: Allah did indeed find you an orphan and protected you. He was an orphan from both sides: his father as well as mother died. His father died before his birth. His mother died before he crossed the age of suckling. But Allah sheltered him. He provided

him with the love of someone who could train and protect him. This protection from Allah continued till he reached the objective God intended for him. The words: “**an orphan, and shelter you?**” The expression “*fa āwā*, He sheltered” without a mention of the object of the verb has been used due to two reasons; one related to expression and the other relating to meaning. As for the reason related to expression, this expression has been used to match the verse ending rhymes of the initial part of the Surah. As for the reason relating to meaning if the words *fa āwā ka* were used the implication would be restricted to sheltering and protecting the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] exclusively. The reality is that Allah’s protection is more general and all encompassing. The Almighty not only sheltered the Prophet [pbuh] but He sheltered others through him; he sheltered and protected the believers, He helped and supported them. He saved them.

Allah says: **Did He not find lacking knowledge (*ḍāllan*), and guide you?** He found you *ḍāllan*, that is, unlettered, not knowing. This has been said because Allah’s Messenger did not know anything of the sort before he received the revelation. Elsewhere Allah says: “He taught you what you did not know.” (Q 4:113) He also says: “Not before this did you recite any Book, or inscribe it with your right hand.” (Q 29:48) Thus the Prophet [pbuh] did not know anything. Rather he was one of the unlettered people. Allah says: “It is He who has raised up from among the common people a Messenger from among them.” (Q 62:2) He did not read or write. But he received this unparalleled status due to the revelation which Allah sent upon him. Thus he learnt and taught. In this Surah Allah says: “He guided.” He did not say: He guided you. This is in order to keep the expression wider and vaster. Thus we learn that the Prophet [pbuh] was guided by Allah and the people were in turn guided due to him. Thus he is the guided and the guide. Thus the expression *fahadā* means: He guided you and guided others through you.

Did He not find you needy, and suffice you? That is, he found you a destitute not owning anything. *fa aghnā*, meaning, He made you independent and extended the same favour to others through you. Elsewhere Allah says: “God has promised you many spoils to take.” The believers continued to gain spoils from the disbelievers through the swords. All these great spoils were granted because of the Messenger as the believers followed his guidance. They followed his sunnah. The Almighty granted them victory and they gained spoils from the east and the west. If the Muslim ummah returns to the ways of the pious elders (*salf*) the divine help, self sufficiency, honour and power would also return to them. Unfortunately, however, everyone belonging to the Muslim ummah today pursues his desires of the flesh without any consideration if the object of his love brings help to Islam or leads to its disgrace. Anyone given to a little power to ponder would clearly know that

the most recent events in reality caused disgrace of the Muslims. It is a cause of great and unprecedented evil that is awaited by those beyond these especially the Jews and the Christians who are friends and allies of each other. Allah Almighty said: “O believers, take not Jews and Christians as friends; they are friends of each other.” (Q 5:51)

The Jews and the Christians are united in their enmity for Islam. Neither of them likes Islam. Nor do they like the Muslims. They don't intend to bring honour to Islam. However, Allah shall support His religion no matter how bad the circumstances. Allah is going to help His religion and the Book regardless what the Muslims do. Allah says: “Such days We deal out in turn among men.” (Q 3:140). There shall come a day when the Muslims will be fighting against the Jews. They will be helped till when a tree would point out a Jew hiding under it. The tree will say: “O Muslim here is a Jew under me.” The Muslim shall come forward and kill him.[5] This is not a bit difficult for Allah Almighty. However, the Muslims need a wise knowledgeable leadership; a leadership which knows the Sharī'ah of Allah before anything else. Leadership unguided by the light of the Sharī'ah is sure to become a trouble regardless of the matter how high it goes. Even if goes as high as zenith itself it shall fall down in the deep bottom of disgrace. Leadership should be guided by Islam, by the light of Islam, not by nationality nor by partisanship, nor by nationalism; but by Islam alone. So Islam alone is the guarantor of the honour of the ummah. However, the ummah needs a wise leadership which can put the matters at their proper place, wait for the proper steps in every issue and not make haste. It is not possible that people are on the right course in the morning and the evening. Whoever intends to achieve that he in fact intends to change the sunnah of Allah.

We know that the Prophet [pbuh] remained in Makkah for ten years. Revelation came to him all the time. He continued calling the people to Allah in the best manner. However, towards the end of this period he left Makkah secretly. He could not bring the preaching to culmination in Makkah. How do we want to change the ummah which has been in slumber for centuries? It has been asleep all the time. It is a defect in reasoning and deviation in the religion to try to achieve that overnight. The ummah is in need of a mild and gradual treatment. It has to be called to the truth in the best manner. It needs to obtain understanding of the religion and wisdom in the act of preaching others to Allah. It requires knowledge in the current affairs, insight and information. It needs to gain appreciation of the issues which require a long term program of betterment. Sometime the results don't appear in a month, or two months or a year or two. The wise man waits. He considers and weighs the issues so that he learns. These issues also require will and patience. This is a must. One must have strong will to protect one. One needs to be patient so

that one remains steadfast. Otherwise, most of the matters would be lost upon us. Allah is the only helper and supporter.

Allah Almighty says: **As for the orphan, do not oppress him.** This is in response to the divine saying: **Did He not find you an orphan, and shelter you?** The implication is, since Allah is the one who sheltered you when you were an orphan, therefore, you should not oppress the orphans unless there is a benefit for him in a rebuke etc. This however would not be oppression even though it seems to be. One at time rebukes and censures an orphan for the sake of a great benefit of the orphan himself. So never oppress an orphan. Rather you should respect him. It is Sharī'ah obligation to do good to an orphan and to honour him. It is included in the good acts. An orphan is the child whose father dies before he reaches mature and adult age. His heart is broken which needs to be mended. He needs someone who can give him comfort and the one who can bring him pleasure. This is all the more demanding when the orphan reaches seven or ten years when he can know the matters.

And as for the beggar, scold him not. This corresponds to His saying: **Did He not find you erring, and guide you?**

And as for the seeker (sā'il), scold him not. The first implication in the word *sā'il*, seeker, is the one seeking to learn the Sharī'ah, knowledge. So don't scold such a person. He asks you only because he wants you to explain to him the Sharī'ah. So it is obligatory upon you to explain the Sharī'ah to him as Allah Almighty has said: "And when God took compact with those who had been given the Book: 'You shall make it clear unto the people, and not conceal it.'" (Q 3:187) So don't scold such an enquirer. If you scold him you would make him dislike you. He comes to you to enquire about the Sharī'ah only because he considers you above him otherwise he would not ask of you anything. If you scold him while he holds you in high esteem you would make him under pressure and his senses would falter. He would not be able to determine what to ask of you. He might also not be able to understand your response to his question. You should imagine yourself at the stead of a junior who is scolded by a senior. You would be able to learn if he scolded you and your senses would be lost. You should not be able to manage your thought and control your reason. Therefore, you should not scold the seeker.

The word *sā'il* in the verse may also imply those who beg for financial help. That is, if someone approaches you seeking financial help don't scold him. However, this generality of expression is subject to a specification: it may be the case that the person asking questions about knowledge is putting questions in obduracy, trying to find your view and the view of the other

people so that he can strike the views of the scholars against each other. If you feel that by a question is thrown with this intention then you have the right to scold the person. You have the right to say: O man, fear Allah. Did not you ask the same question from such a scholar? How can you ask me the question after you have asked the same question from that particular scholar? Do you intend to play with the religion of Allah? Would you become silent only if the people gave you the view that you desire and continue asking the question from others if they don't give you the favourite response? You can scold such a man. This scolding is a sort of punishment for him.

Similar is the ruling about the case of a person asking you about wealth. At times you are sure that the person asking you for money is indeed rich. In this case you have the right to scold him. You can also scold him for asking you for money while he is rich. Thus this generality of expression in “**and as for the seeker, scold him not**” is specified. It is related to specific cases. In the cases when there is a benefit in scolding the seeker then it is an option.

And as for you Lord's blessing, declare it. The blessings of Allah upon the Messenger have been recounted in the previous three verses: “Did He not find you an orphan, and shelter you? Did He not find you erring, and guide you? Did He not find you needy, and suffice you?” So these three verses cover all the blessings. So declare the blessings of Allah and say: I was an orphan and Allah sheltered me. I was in search of the truth Allah guided me. I was in need and Allah made me independent. This expression is made in order to declare the blessing and be thankful to Allah. It should not be made in order to boast of the blessings one enjoys in front of the people. If one declares the blessings one enjoys in front of the people in order to show pride that would be condemnable. However, if you confess of the blessings of Allah with the intention to acknowledge the blessings and being thankful to Allah that is the command of Allah.

These are the few words I have uttered about this great Surah of the Qur'an. What I or anyone else among the scholars says while commenting on the Qur'an does not cover every meaning and explanation of the Qur'an. We ask Allah to grant us understanding of His religion and to give us ability to practice what He has taught us. Indeed He has power over everything.

[1] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 532, Book of Mosques.

[2] Reference to this hadith has already passed. See page: 205.

[3] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 3904, Book of Merits of the Ansar, Chapter: The Migration of the Prophet [pbuh] and his companions to Madinah; Sahih of Muslim, No: 2382 (2), Book of Virtues of the Companions, Chapter: Virtues of Abu Bakr [rta].

[4] The reference to this hadith has already passed at page: 110.

[5] Sahih of Muslim, No: 2922 (82), Book of Trials, Chapter: The Hereafter shall not come unless a man passes by the grave of another person.

Sūrah al-Sharḥ: 94

Verses 1-8

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The verse *basmalah* has already been explained.

Allah Almighty describes His blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] and says: **Did We not expand your breast for you (*alam nashrah laka ṣadrak*)?** The scholars have explained that this is a rhetorical question. It implies affirmation. This type of rhetorical questions is frequently used in the Qur'an. The implied verb is taken to be in the past tense further stressed by implied *qad* (indeed. The meaning would be: Indeed we have expanded your breast for you.) Thus in the phrase *alam nashrah laka* (**Did We not expand for you**) the intended meaning if expressed positively would be as follows: We have expanded your breast for you. The Almighty affirms that He has expanded the breast of the Prophet [pbuh] for him. Similarly, all such rhetorical questions in the Qur'an should be interpreted this way. One should consider the past tense of the verb used stressed by the particle *qad* (indeed). We take the past tense of the verb implied and unstated because the matter about which the question is put has already happened. We take it to be stressed by the particle *qad* (indeed) because this particle gives the meaning of stress applicable to the past tense of the verb used. If the particle *qad* is applied before a present or future tense it gives the sense of less intensity of the matter expressed by the verb it follows. A saying goes as follows: *qad yajūdu al-bakhīl* (sometimes a stingy man behaves generously). The *qad* in this sentence gives the sense of rareness. However, in the divine saying: *Qad ya'lamu mā antum 'alayhi*, (He knows what you are you on), the particle *qad* gives the meaning of stress on the verb and surety of the matter conveyed.

Allah Almighty says: **“Did We not expand your breast for you?”** That is, we have indeed expanded it. This is not literal expansion. Rather it is metaphorical. Expanding the heart means giving it immense strength to bear the divine commands. These are two types of commands: a) Religious (Sharī'ah) which comprise the Religion of Allah and b) the cosmic, that is, the hardships one faces. The Prophet [pbuh] has been granted this expansion of the heart because the Sharī'ah implies confrontation with the human desires. A man finds it hard to implement the rulings of Allah. He also finds it hard to stay away from the prohibitions. Both these acts go against the human desires. The human *nafs* does not open up and readily accept the commands of Allah and His prohibitions. We notice many people find it hard to offer prayer. Allah

Almighty says concerning the hypocrites: “When they stand up to pray they stand up lazily.” (Q 4:42) There are people who find it easy to offer prayer. Rather they are desirous to perform this duty. They wait for the prayer timing so that they can offer it. The Messenger of Allah says: “My comfort has been provided in prayer.”[1]

Therefore, we can say that the Sharī‘ah rulings are hard upon *nafs*. Consider for example avoiding the prohibitions. Some of the people desire to commit acts prohibited by the Sharī‘ah like for example adultery and fornication, drinking liquor and other such acts. Thus it is hard upon such men to avoid committing these things. Some of the people are however favored by Allah and their hearts are opened and expanded for the Sharī‘ah. They run away from everything prohibited by Allah. Consider for example the attitude of Yūsuf [pbuh]. He was called upon by the wife of the Azīz to commit the sin. She locked the door shutting the Prophet Yūsuf [pbuh] and herself in the room. She said: Come on. She prepared herself for him, adorned herself fully, and wore the best clothes. Moreover she was a very beautiful woman. The place was secure. None could enter there. She had locked the doors. She said: Come on. Enjoy. The Prophet Yūsuf [pbuh] said: “I go in Allah’s refuge.” He sought refuge of his Lord because it was a hard time for him. He was young. The woman was the wife of the Aziz. The place was secure and there was nobody. A man is a man after all. At times his *nafs* whispers to him to do the things the body desires. This is why the Almighty says: “For she desired him; and he would have taken her, but that he saw the proof of his Lord.” (Q 12:24)

According to a *ḥadīth*, the Prophet [pbuh] said: “Allah will give shade, to seven, on the Day when there will be no shade but His. (These seven persons are) a just ruler, a youth who has been brought up in the worship of Allah (i.e. worships Allah sincerely from childhood), a man whose heart is attached to the mosques (i.e. to pray the compulsory prayers in the mosque in congregation), two persons who love each other only for Allah's sake and they meet and part in Allah's cause only, a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for illicit intercourse with her and says: I am afraid of Allah, a man who gives charitable gifts so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given (i.e. nobody knows how much he has given in charity), and a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes are then flooded with tears.”[2]

The part of the *ḥadīth* that relates to this topic is this: “a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for illicit intercourse with her and says: I am afraid of Allah.” So the expansion of the heart for the Sharī‘ah ruling means acceptance of the Sharī‘ah rulings with pleasure, following it in practice, and saying: I hear and I obey. You yourself at times find yourself

eager to worship Allah. You do this with ease and contentment. At times your state is quite the opposite. There come moments when you would do commit a sin if you are not God-conscious. If this is the status of a single person you can imagine the difference in the different humans in this regards.

Coming to the expansion of the heart for the cosmic rulings of Allah we see that a man, whose heart has been expanded by Allah for His decrees, remains happy and contented with the decisions of Allah about him. He remains satisfied. He says: "I am a servant of Allah. Allah is the Lord. He does what He likes." Such a man is always happy. He does not get sad and anxious. He feels pain on hardships but does not go as far as being under grief and sorrow. This is why according to a Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥadīth the Prophet [pbuh] said: "Strange is the case of a believing man! All his matters are good for him. This is an exclusive share of a believer. If he is struck with a hardship he shows patience. This proves to be good for him. If he finds comfort he shows gratitude. This also proves good for him." [3]

Thus expansion of the heart means its broadness. It implies that the heart is ready to accept the commands of Allah; Sharī'ah commands and the cosmic commands. This heart does not find itself in straits in absolute sense. The Prophet [pbuh] had a great share in this regards. That is exactly why we see that he feared God most of all. He would strictly obey Allah. He was the most patient before the divine decrees about him. What did the people do to him when he started preaching the message? How severe diseases he suffered? He suffered to the extent that he would suffer from fever as much as any two individuals could suffer together. The disease would be very intense for him as much as two among us could bear. It has been reported by 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ūd [rta] that he said:

I visited Allah's Apostle while he was suffering from a high fever. I said, "O Allah's Apostle! You have a high fever." He said, "Yes, I have as much fever as two men of you." [4] Moreover, at the time of his death when he departed this world he suffered a lot. At that time too, he was the most patient. Patience has a very high status. This excellence can't be achieved unless you find something demanding patience. Patience is not shown against an easy and cool thing. This is why we find that the Prophets of God were made to suffer hardships most of all. The pious people come next. Those nearer to these suffer harder so on and so forth.

Did We not expand your breast for you and lift from you your burden? One can object to this and say: The two verses are not harmonious. The first one is in the present tense (*muḍāri'*): *nashrakh*. The second is in the past tense, *wa waḍa'nā*, and we lifted. But based on the explanation I have offered already,

that is, *alam nashrah* means, indeed we have expanded, the sentence *waḍa'nā* has been conjugated with the verb that agrees to it in tense (that is, both are in the past tense).

And lift from you (*wa waḍa'nā*) your burden (*wizra ka*). *wa waḍa'nā hu*, that is, we lifted it, removed it, relaxed it and excused you. *Wizrak* means your sin. **That weighed down (*anqaḍa*) you back?** That is, the burden did away your back and made it bend down. The back is the body part which carries weight. When a person carries a burden weighing down the back the other body parts would get tired by it all the more. The reason is the back is the part which is the strongest of all body parts. To understand this difference you can carry a case on your back and then in your hands. You will see that carrying on the back is easy as the back is stronger. The meaning of the verse is that the Almighty has forgiven the *wizr*, mistakes and sins of the Prophet [pbuh]. So he lived as already pardoned. Allah says: “Surely We have given you a manifest victory, that God may forgive your former and you latter sins. (Q 48:1-2)

The Prophet [pbuh] would stand in prayer at night and would prolong his prayer to the extent that his feet would swell. It was said to him: “Allah has forgiven your former and latter sins. Why do you do this then?” He said: “Should not I be a grateful man?”[5] Thus it is established by the Qur'an and the Sunnah that the Prophet's sins, former and latter, were forgiven. This is a speciality of the Prophet [pbuh]. No other human being has been granted this forgiveness except for the Messenger of Allah. The rest of the people need to repent and turn to God to gain forgiveness of a sin. At times Allah forgives sins other than polytheism without repentance by the person. However, we affirm clearly that the Prophet's former and latter sins were forgiven. This is why Allah says: **and lift from you your burden, the burden that weighed down you back?**

If someone puts an objection and says: This verse and the corroborative ones prove that the Prophet [pbuh] commits sins. Does a Prophet [pbuh] really commit sins? Our response would be this: Yes. It is not possible for us to reject the clear religious texts merely on the basis that we find it improbable that the Prophet [pbuh] could commit sins. It is not the real honour of a man that he does not commit sins. Rather the real honour lies in that he is forgiven by Allah. This is important that he is pardoned. As for the supposition that a man does not sin we refer to the following saying of the Prophet [pbuh]: “All the human beings are prone to sins. The best of them however are the ones who repent.”[6]

There is no escape from error. However, there are sins and errors which can't be committed by a Messenger. Lying and dishonesty are examples. These can't

be committed by the Prophets [pbut]. If we suppose the possibility of falsehood and dishonesty to be committed by the Messengers of God that would harm their status of Prophethood. It is impossible. Similarly, the graver immoralities like adultery and the like cannot be committed by them. This negates the essence of the Prophethood. The Prophethood has been introduced to bring the morality to its culmination. Allah's Prophet [pbuh] said: "I have been sent to complement the high moral values." [7] To sum up we can say that the Almighty has removed the burden of the Prophet [pbuh]. Allah has explained that this burden had weighed down the back of the Prophet [pbuh]. It made his back tired. If this is true of the burden of the Prophet [pbuh] you can imagine the extent of the sins of the other people. Our sins have weighed down our backs and caused them to exhaust. However, we are unaffected as if we have no burden of sins to carry. This indifference is due to the fact that our faith is weak, our insight is impaired and our negligence is abundant. We ask Allah to deal us with forgiveness.

In some of the relics of the pious elders it has been reported that when a believer commits a sin he feels as he is taking a mountain on his head. Contrarily when a hypocrite commits a sin he feels as if only a mosquito has sat on his nose. He just dismisses it. [8] It means he does not worry at all. Thus a believer takes his sins seriously and it brings him sorrow. He escapes this feeling through repentance and seeking forgiveness or through major good works to remove the signs of the sin. When you find that your heart does not bother at the sins you commit then you should learn that your heart is sick. A living heart can't be satisfied with a sickness. Sins are the sickness of the heart as has been said by 'Abd Allah b. al-Mubārak, may Allah bless him:

I have seen that the sins kill the hearts. Addiction to sins bequeaths humiliation. Abandoning sins gives life to the hearts. It is better for you to stand against sins.

Therefore it is obligatory upon us to take care of our *nafs* and keep it under scrutiny. We see that the traders and businessmen don't go to sleep before checking their accounts, expenditure, expenses and earnings. The traders of the hereafter should be more careful in maintaining his accounts. Their trade is greater in importance. The best gain the trade of the seekers of this world can bring them is the comfort of the body. Moreover, this trade accompanies worries and sorrow that is known. When a man suffers loss in a trade he worries. When there are dangers in the city like for example robberies and thefts the trader becomes worried. However, the trade in the issues relating to the affairs of the hereafter is entirely different. Allah says:

O believers, shall I direct you to a commerce that shall deliver you from a painful chastisement? You shall believe in God and His Messenger, and struggle in the way of God with your possessions and your selves. That is better for you, did you but know. He will forgive you your sins and admit you into gardens underneath which rivers flow. (Q 61:10-12)

The trade in the hereafter saves us from the painful chastisement. Because of it Allah forgives our sins. Because of this one can gain entry into the gardens of eternal bliss; where there will pure life in pure residences; pure in structure and pure in material. The Prophet [pbuh] said: “Two gardens, the utensils and the contents of which are of silver, and two other gardens, the utensils and contents of which are of gold.”[9] When a man sees these texts a fear runs through him. He fears ostentations. He fears self-absorption. He fears humiliation. **Did We not exalt thy fame?** There is no doubt in that Allah has exalted the fame of the Prophet [pbuh]. None doubts this fact.

Firstly, a mention of his name is made at the time of every prayer. This happens in Adhān which is sounded from a high place. One says: I bear witness that there is no god but Allah. I bear witness to that Muhammad [pbuh] is the Messenger of Allah.

Secondly, every believer is obliged to make a mention of the Prophet’s name during *tashahhud* in every prayer. *Tashahhud* is obligatory part of the prayer. One says: I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad [pbuh] is the servant of Allah and His Messenger.

Thirdly, the fame of the Prophet [pbuh] is exalted in every worship ritual. In every prayer the name of the Prophet [pbuh] is mentioned and he is praised. This we can say because there are two essential conditions of every valid worship ritual: sincerity for the Almighty Allah, and obedience to the Prophet [pbuh]. We know that a person who follows the Prophet in worship keeps that in mind that he is following the Prophet [pbuh] in that particular worship. This implies that the fame of the Prophet [pbuh] is raised.

The words of Allah Almighty: **So truly with hardship comes ease, truly with hardship comes ease.** This is a glad tiding for the Prophet [pbuh] from Allah Almighty. This glad tiding also extends to the entire ummah. The Prophet [pbuh] went through hardship in Makkah. He was in straits. In Taif too he suffered the same trouble. Similarly, in Madinah he suffered at the hands of the hypocrites. Allah says: **So truly with hardship comes ease, truly with hardship comes ease.** The implication is: Just as we expanded your heart for you, removed your sins and exalted your fame--all three of which are great blessings--similarly, this hardship you are facing will lead to ease. **So truly**

with hardship comes ease, truly with hardship comes ease. While commenting on this verse, Ibn Abbās [rta] said: “No hardship can overpower the two eases.”[10] The Almighty mentioned the words ‘*usr* and *yusr* twice. What then is the meaning of the saying of Ibn Abbās [rta]?

The Arabic rhetoricians have said: In reality the word ‘*usr* has been mentioned only once. In the words: “So truly with hardship comes ease, truly with hardship comes ease” the first occurrence of the word ‘*usr* has been repeated such that it has been made definitive by the use of AL (the). This AL is the one used to refer to an antecedent. As for the word *yusr* it has been repeated as indefinite noun. The grammatical ruling about this matter follows: If a noun is repeated twice in indefinite form the implication of the latter use must be distinct from that of the first one. The reason is that the latter too is in indefinite form. So it is necessarily other than the first. Thus in these two verses there are two *yusrs* and one ‘*usr*. The word *usr* has been repeated as definitive.

So truly with hardship comes ease. This is a piece of news from Allah. The Almighty, the giver of the most perfectly true news, does not go back on His words. So whenever you find a difficulty wait for the ease which must follow it. This is true of the religious issues. In the prayer for example you are required to offer prayer while standing. If you can’t do that then you can offer it while sitting. If that too is not possible then you can pray while lying. This is easing. When you find standing in the prayer hard sit down. If you find it hard to offer prayer while sitting too then you may lie down and offer the prayer.

In the worship ritual of fasting too you are required to observe fast if you are staying at a place and you don’t have the power to keep the fast. If you are unable to fast then you should defer it. If you are travelling you leave the fast. Similarly, in Hajj ritual too you are obliged to offer it if you have the means to travel to the House of Allah. If you can’t go then you are not obliged to offer hajj. The ease goes to the extent that if you have left your home for hajj and you have been held hostage by circumstances. If you can’t complete the hajj then too you can finish *ihrām*, cancel hajj rituals and offer the sacrificial animals. Allah Almighty says: “Fulfil the Pilgrimage and the Visitation unto God; but if you are prevented, then such offering as may be feasible.” (Q 2:196) Therefore, every hardship a man faces in worship is accompanied by an ease and convenience.

The same goes for the divine decree and predestination. I mean the decrees of Allah about tangible hardships and problems in life and psychological problems and other such issues. A believer does not get disappointed on these. Every hardship is followed by an ease. However, the ease appears in physical

as well as metaphorical sense. For example a man is poor. The life is hard upon him. But Allah grants him sufficiency and wealth. Another example is that of a sick man. The disease has weighed him down and is hard for him. Allah grants him health. This is also a psychological ease. Then there is a metaphorical sense of the ease. Allah grants a man power to be patient. This too is ease. When Allah helps us bear a thing patiently He makes a difficult thing easy for us. The hardship you are facing which is so difficult to bear that if it befalls a rock it would be shaken. Yet this difficulty becomes easy for you with the patience God grants you and the help He gives. Ease does not mean that a difficulty is removed permanently without leaving a trace. Rather ease means that the feeling of the trouble is removed. This is the real sense of the word ease. It also implies that Allah helps a man be patient so that the most difficult matter becomes easy for him to bear. We say that because we have firm faith in the promise of Allah.

So when you are empty, labour, and let you Lord be you Quest. The implication is: When you are free after fulfilling your job then you should turn to another duty. Try to do the next job. Don't let the world waste you. This is why the life of a man of understanding is the life of action. Whenever he finishes one work he starts another. Time passes for a man sleeping as well as the one working. It ticks regardless of the matter one is working or is free. It is not possible for anything to stop and hold time. Even if all the humans and the other creatures join hands to stop the sun and make the day grow longer they would not be able to do that. Thus it is never possible for anyone to stop time. This means that you should make your life one of action. When you have finished a job start another work. When you have finished a mundane duty, start doing the work beneficial for the afterlife. When you have finished the work done for the betterment of the afterlife, start a work good for your life herein. When you have finished the Friday Congregational Prayer scatter in the world and seek Allah's blessings.

The Friday congregation comes between two mundane activities. Allah Almighty says: "O believers, when proclamation is made for prayer on the Day of Congregation, (that is when you are busy in your worldly matters), hasten to God's remembrance and leave trafficking aside; that is better for you, did you but know. Then, when the prayer is finished, scatter in the land and seek God's bounty, and remember God frequently; haply you will prosper. (Q 62:9-10) So when we accomplish one task we engage in another. When we finish the latter we initiate another. This is how a man should always lead his life in work and engagement. One may ask: If you do so much labour all your life you will get tired and feel boredom. We would respond to him as follows:

You take rest in order to refresh yourself. To take rest in order to regain interest and enthusiasm is also work and engagement. Engagement does not exclusively mean movement. Therefore, to take rest in order to gain strength and enthusiasm for the next work is also a proper act. It is important for you to translate your life into work and activity.

And let your Lord be your Quest. When you do some works and start another after concluding these then you should turn to God seeking His reward and seeking His help. Be with the Almighty Allah before and after any act you undertake. To be with Allah before doing a task is to ask Allah's help. When you have completed that particular work you ask for reward from Him. In the words "**And let your Lord be you Quest (*ilā rabbika farghab*)**" there is a fine stylistic and rhetorical point: *ilā rabbika* (to your Lord) is grammatically related to *irghab*. However, it has been put before the verb (while normally the order should be reversed). To preposition and commonly post-positioned element implies stress. The meaning therefore is: Turn to Allah and not anyone or anything else for every matter you face. Be sure that turning your interests to Allah will earn you ease in all the matters. Many people don't follow this behaviour. You see they lack an attitude of turning to Allah always. Therefore, you see that many of their matters are spoiled for them. This is only because there is no relation between their works and Allah. We beseech Allah to make us followers of His commands, affirmers of His news. He indeed has the power to do everything.

[1] Musnad of Imām Ahmad b. Hanbal, 3/128.

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī No:6806, Book of Ḥudūd (Punishments), Chapter: Excellence of the one who abandons evils; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1031 (91), Book of Zakāh, Chapter: Excellence of Giving Charity in Secrecy.

[3] Reference to this Hadith has already passed. See page: 78.

[4] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 5648, Book of Patients, Chapter: Most prone to trials are Prophets, then the most pious, and then the less pious; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2571 (45), Book of Virtue, Enjoining Good Manners, and Joining of the Ties of Kinship, Chapter: he Reward Of The Believer For Whatever Befalls Him Of Sickness, Grief And The Like, Even A Thorn That Pricks Him.

[5] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 1130, Book of Tahajjud (Night Prayer), Chapter: Night Vigil of the Prophet [pbuh]; Sahih of Muslim, No: 2820 (81), Book of Characterists of the Hypocrites, Chapter: Doing A Lot Of Good Deeds And Striving Hard In Worship.

[6] Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, No: 2449, Book of Characteristics of the Day of Judgement, Chapter: A Believing Considers his sins a matter of grave concern. al-Tirmidhi commented: This is a gharib (transmitted through a single chain of narrators) hadith.

[7] al-Bukhari, al-Adab al-Mufrad, 273.

[8] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 6308, Book of Invocations, Chapter: Repentance.

[9] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 4878, Book Prophetic Commentary on the Qur'an, Chapter: The divine saying: and two other gardens.

[10] al-Muwattā 2:446; Muṣannaf of Ibn Abī Shaybah, 5/335, 13/308, Shu'ab al-īmān, 7/205-6, al-Ḥakim, 2:103.

Sūrah al-Tīn: 95

Verses 1-8

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

By the fig and the olive and the Mount Sinai and this land secure! Allah Almighty has sworn by these four things: fig, olive, Mount Sinai and this secure land, that is, the city of Makkah. Since the Surah is Makkan in origin the reference would necessarily be to Makkah. Fig is the known fruit. Olive is also well known. Allah has sworn the oath by these two fruits as they grow abundantly in Palestine. Allah has also sworn the oath by the Mount Sinai because it is the place near which Allah spoke to Moses [pbuh]. Allah swore by **this land secure**, that is, Makkah, because it is the most beloved place on the earth to Allah and is the most honourable in His eyes.

Some of the scholars have held that Allah has sworn the oath by these three because the first oath, that is, **“by the fig and the olive”** is a reference to Palestine which is the land of the Prophets. The last of the Israelite Prophets [pbuh] sent to the Children of Israel was Jesus [pbuh], son of Mary. Allah swore by the Mount Sinai because it is the mount around which Allah started sending revelation to Moses [pbuh]. As for the secure city, that is, Makkah, He swore by it because the Prophet Muhammad was raised in it. The scholars have said: The “the Mount Sinai” means: The Blessed Ṭūr because this piece of land and its surroundings have been declared by God to be sacred.

We indeed created Man in the fairest stature. This is the *muqsam ‘alayhi*, that is, the fact sworn of. Allah swore an oath and affirmed that He created man in the best stature. This statement of the *muqsam ‘alayhi* has been stressed by three tools of stress: oaths, the particle L (implying affirmation), and *qad* (which too is used to stress a fact). Allah swore that He created man in the best stature and the most beautiful form. Man has been created in **“the fairest stature”** in form and purpose. There is no creation on the earth more beautiful than human beings because Allah has said: **“We indeed created Man in the fairest stature.”**

The words: **then We restored him (radadnā hu) the lowest of the low (asfala sāfilīn).** This “restoration” mentioned by Allah Almighty implies that He will return the man to the state of the lowest of the low in body and structure. Elsewhere Allah Almighty says: “and some of you will be kept back unto the vilest state of life.” (Q 16:70) As a human being grows in age his physical power as well as body form deteriorates. His exuberance in the face also fades. Thus he is returned to the lowest of the low. I have held that the words *aḥsana*

taqwīm also imply the human orientation upon which Allah created man as well as the servitude based on this nature. Considering this we can say that in this sense the returning to the low status indicates only to those who match this condition. May Allah protect us! A man becomes lowest of the low after being at the highest status in his belief and knowledge. Thus the verse covers both the interpretations.

Then Allah says: **save those who believe, and do righteous deeds; they shall have a wage unfailing.** This is an exception from the statement “**then We restored him (*radadnā hu*) the lowest of the low (*asfala āfilīn*).**” The meaning is: This reversal to the lowest of the low state happens except with the case of the believers who have faith and do the righteous deeds. They are not returned to be the lowest of the low. They retain their position as they stick to the faith and actions. They maintain this status till they die. The words “**they shall have a wage**” that is, reward, **unfailing**, that will not be cut. Nor will they be reminded of the favour. The word *mamnūn* accepts the meaning of cutting as well as reminding favours. Thus these people have reward unfailing, unending. They will not be reminded of the favour. That is, when they will have obtained the reward they will not be told that it is a favour upon them. Thus it will not be said to them: We granted you this and did this and that for you.” This is in spite of the fact that it is nothing but a favour from God upon them that they believed and did the righteous deeds. Everything of these goods is a favour from Allah. However, Allah will not remind them that they are having this favour from Him. It will not be declared to them that they owe this favour as is done in the worldly matters. Someone does you a good. However, he can at times remind you of his favour, embarrass you and give you pain. He might say: I did this to you. I granted this or that to you. He may also use other such expressions.

Subsequently, Allah Almighty says: **What then shall cry you lies as to the Doom (*al-dīn*)?** That is, what is the point, o man, that makes you reject this clear explication of the religion? “To the Dīn” means: to what Allah commanded as part of the religion. This is why we see that whenever a man ponders over his *nafs*, his origin and his form, considers that Allah chose him for the best mould of creation and appreciates that He granted him the best orientation, his faith in Allah increases. He affirms the Book of Allah more strongly and testifies to the veracity of the news given by His Messengers.

Allah says: **Is not God the justest (*aḥkam*) of judges?** This is rhetorical question implying affirmation. Allah establishes that He is the most just of all judges. The word *aḥkam* (the most just) in this verse is the superlative degree. The word is derived from *al-ḥikmah* (wisdom) as well as *ḥakam*(arbitrator). Thus Allah is the supreme authority who issues laws. None and nothing can

contradict his rulings. The best wisdom is that of Allah Almighty. He is the best of judges in his ruling and decrees. The authority lies with him alone. All the issues are settled by Him. We ask Allah to grant us the knowledge of His Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet [pbuh]. He indeed has the power to do everything.

Sūrah al-‘Alaq: 96

Verses 1-8

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Recite: In the Name of your Lord who created, created Man of a blood-clot. Recite: And you Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the Pen, taught Man that he knew not. These verses comprise the first revelations of the Qur’an upon the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh].[1] These were revealed upon the Prophet [pbuh] when he was worshipping in the Cave Hira. The revelation upon the Prophet [pbuh] was initially started by the true dreams. Whatever he saw in his dreams would come true as the bright daylight.[2] What he saw in the dreams would come out exactly as he dreamed. The first such dreams he had were shown him in the month of Rabi al-Awwal. Thus he continued having such dreams for six months. Whenever he saw a dream it would come true. In the month of Ramadan he received the first revelation while he was awake. There are six months period between Rabi al-Awwal and Ramadan. The total time period of revelation spans over twenty-three years. It has been reported in the Ḥadīth: “The true dream is the forty-sixth part of the Prophethood.”[3] Since the Prophet [pbuh] would have such visions which came out to be true like broad day light, he developed a love for solitude. He would go in seclusion and stay away from the ignorant society. He concluded that the best solitude would be in the mountain of Hira. There was a cave near the top of the mount. A strong man could rise to that point only after much exertion. The Prophet [pbuh] would ascent to that cave and *dotahannuth*, worshipping Allah the way He showed him. He would remain engaged in worship there for many days. He would take with him provisions including food and drink. Then he would descend, come back home and get sustenance again and return to the cave and worship Allah. This routine continued till he received the first revelation when he was still there in the cave.

Jibrīl [pbuh] came to him and commanded him to read. The Prophet [pbuh] replied: “I am not a *qārī* (literally reader).” It means: I am not among those who can read. This response did not imply a disobedience to the command of the angel Jibrīl [pbuh]. It meant that the Prophet [pbuh] could not read. He was not a literate man. He was unlettered. Allah Almighty says: “Believe then in God, and in His Messenger, the unlettered (*ummiyy*) Prophet of the common folk.” (Q 7:158) Allah Almighty also says: “It is He who has raised up from among the common people (*ummiyyīn*) a Messenger from among them.” (Q 62:2) Thus the Prophet [pbuh] would not read and write. Wisdom of Allah

required that His Prophet [pbuh] would not read or write so that he could understand and appreciate the need for this institution of Messengership. Another point of wisdom in this is that none should doubt in the veracity of his prophethood. To this point the following saying of Allah points: “Not before this would you recite any Book, or inscribe it with your right hand, for then those who follow falsehood would: have doubted.” (Q 29:48)

The Prophet [pbuh] replied to the angel: “I am not a reciter.” The angle then squeezed him twice or thrice. Then he said again: **Recite: In the Name of your Lord who created, created Man of a blood-clot. Recite: And you Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the Pen, taught Man that he knew not.**” These five verses were revealed. The Prophet [pbuh] then returned home with this. His heart was shivering with fear till he reached Khadija [rta]. The Ḥadīth containing the story of the first revelation is found in the beginning of the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī.[4] Those who intend to study it may refer to that source.

Allah says: “**Recite: In the Name of your Lord (*bismi rabbika*) who created.**” The words: *bismi rabbik*. It has been said that it means: Read while clinging to the name of your Lord. Another meaning is: Read seeking help of your Lord. All the names of Allah are good and all of them can be invoked by a man seeking His help. A believer invokes Allah and asks for His help before making *wuḍū*, before eating, and even before having sex with his spouse. All the names of Allah are source of help. Allah says: *bismi rabbik*, and has not said: *bism Allah*. The reason is that in this context it is the divine attribute of sustainer. He provides and manages all the affairs. It is He who has (provided guidance) by initiating this Prophethood. This is why the words *bismi rabbika* have been used. Otherwise, the Almighty provided the Prophet [pbuh] and offered him special sustenance and training.

Who created (*alladhī khalaqa*). The implication is: The one who created everything. Elsewhere Allah says: “and He created everything, then He ordained it very exactly.” (Q 25:3) He also says: “God is the Creator of everything; He is Guardian over everything.” (Q 39:62) So there is nothing in the heavens and the earth, apparent and hidden, small and big, but created by Allah. This is why He says: *khalaqa*, he created. The object of the verb *khalaqa* has been left unstated so that everything could be included among the created things. If the object were mentioned the verb would be restricted to that object. Had He said: He created X that would limit the creation to the mentioned item alone. On the contrary Allah said: “He created.” He left the verb absolute. Thus the verb remained applicable to every creature, general in nature. Thus He is the creator of everything. Then Allah says:

Created Man of a blood-clot. Allah has mentioned creation of humans alone in order to indicate to man's honour and high place. Allah says at another place: "We have honoured the Children of Adam and carried them on land and sea, and provided them with good things, and preferred them greatly over many of those We created." (Q 17:70) This is why Allah has clearly mentioned the creation of man. **Created Man.** That is, He started the creation of man **of a blood-clot ('alaq).** 'alaq is either plural of or the collective noun derived from 'alaqah. It is a parallel of the word *shajar* which is collective noun from *shajarah*. *al-'alaq* is a small red clot of blood. This is the origin of life. A man is only blood. If the blood is emptied from his body he would perish.

Allah Almighty has explained that He created man of a blood clot. However, man's creation went through gradual phases. In other verses Allah told us that He created man out of earth. In some other verses it has been told that He created man out of clay. In some others places it has been explained that He created man out of sounding clay. Yet another verse tells us that he is a created from tickling water. Elsewhere he has been told to be a creation of lowly water. In the verse under discussion it has been said that man is created out of blood clot. Isn't it contradiction?

Our response to this question follows: There is no contradiction among the verses. It is not possible that there is a contraction in the speech of Allah and the sound Ḥadīths of the Prophet [pbuh]. It can never be. Allah says: "If it (that is the Qur'an) had been from other than God surely they would have found in it much inconsistency." (Q 4:82) However, at some places Allah mentions the creation of man from one aspect and others from other aspects. The Almighty created man from earth. The reason is that the Almighty started his creation from dust. Then He put water on it. It turned into clay. Then the material remained for some time and it became a moulded mud. When a long time passed it turned into *ṣalṣāl* (sounding clay). It means that when you would hit it with your hand you would hear a sound. Then the Almighty created man in form of flesh, bones and muscles. All this relates to the creation of Adam. Subsequently Allah created children of Adam from a drop of water termed lowly water by Allah. It is the same water that has been termed elsewhere as ejected water. This drop remains in the womb of the woman for forty days. Then it gradually turns into sticking blood. Then it gradually grows till it is a little less than eighty days when it becomes a piece of flesh. This piece is just equal to the one a man can chew. Then it remains in that form for forty days. Its age is then a hundred and twenty days. This number of days amounts to four months period. After the fourth month is over, Allah sends down to him the angel who deals with the fetuses. This angel blows spirit in the fetus. The spirit enters the body with the permission of Allah. We can't fully comprehend the nature, essence and material of the spirit. As for the body its origin is

earth. In the subsequent phase it originates in the sperm. However, we don't know the origin and essence of the spirit. Nor do we know the material it is made of. Allah says: "They will question you concerning the Spirit. Say: 'The Spirit is of the bidding of my Lord. You have been given of knowledge nothing except a little.'" (Q 17:85)

Thus this angel blows the spirit in the fetus. Thus it starts moving. Its previous growth was like that of the trees, void of any consciousness. After the blowing of the spirit it becomes a human being endowed with the power to move. This is why the Islamic Sharī'ah teaches that if a fetus is aborted before four months of its age it can be buried anywhere without funeral bathing, burial and funeral prayer. It will not be raised to life on the Last Day. He is not considered a human being. If a fetus is aborted after the four months of its age it is wajib to give it a bath, enshroud it, offer its funeral prayer, and bury it in the proper grave. He is considered a human being and is also given name. He shall be raised to live on the Last Day and will be called upon by his name. The parents of this fetus should also offer an *aqiqah* offering for it. However, this *aqiqah* is not that much stressed as is that of the one who is born and reaches seventh days of age. To conclude we can say that the fetus goes through stages in the womb of the mother until becomes a human being. Then Allah allows it to be born which is usually after the nine months of gestation.

In the light of the above we conclude that man has four distinct periods and stages of life:

The first abode: in the womb of his mother.

The second abode: his life in this world.

The third abode: in al-Barzakh

The fourth abode: In Paradise or Hell. This is the final and permanent abode.

Recite: And you Lord is the Most Generous. The command recite has been repeated here. The question is: Is this repetition intended for stress or a new initiation? The sound view is that it is a new command as the first command "**Recite: In the Name of your Lord who created**" was attached to the lordship (rabbubiyah) of Allah. The second command "Recite: And thy Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the Pen" is related to the Sharī'ah. Thus the first command was related to the cosmic rulings of Allah and the second to the Sharī'ah rulings. The teachings through pen is the one upon which the Sharī'ah knowledge rests. The Sharī'ah is written, memorized. The Qur'an is committed to writing and memory. The sunnah too is written down and retained in memory. The discourse of the scholars is also written and memorized. This is why the Almighty Allah has repeated the command "recite" again.

Verses 6-19

Allah Almighty says: **No indeed (*kallā*); surely Man waxes insolent (*la yaṭghā*).** The particle *kallā* is used in many senses: It can mean: indeed. The verse under study is an example of this usage. Thus the particle *kallā* here means “indeed, truly.” The meaning therefore would be as follows: Allah affirms and establishes that undoubtedly and “surely Man waxes insolent, for he thinks himself self-sufficient.” The word ‘*insān*, man’ here does not refer to a particular human being. Rather it is a generic term. Every human being who thinks himself self-sufficient indeed becomes insolent (*yaṭghā*). The word is derived from *ṭughyān*, meaning transgressing the limit set. When a man believes that he is self-sufficient and does not need Allah’s mercy he becomes insolent and transgresses not caring for anything. When he assumes that He is self-sufficient and does not need Allah for removal of his troubles and obtaining his needs he turns away from Allah and does not care. When he believes he is self sufficient with regards to health he does not think about disease. When he thinks he is self sufficient and is full (in stomach), he forgets hunger. When he thinks he has enough clothes he forgets nakedness. So on and so forth. This is how man has transgression in his nature. Whenever he finds himself self sufficient in his own self he forgets other facts and sources.

However, this is not true of the believers. The believer does not believe that he is not in need for Allah even for a while. He is always feeling that he needs Allah Almighty’s blessings. He turns to Allah for every need. Whenever something bad strikes him he runs to the protection of Allah. He knows that even Allah has given himself under his care yet all he has is weakness, neediness and vulnerability. He does not have power to give himself benefit or loss. Such is the believer. However, as a human being everyone has transgression in himself. This is just as said in the following saying of Allah Almighty: “and man carried it. Surely he is sinful, very foolish.” (Q 33:72)

The Almighty threatens and warns this transgressor and says: **Surely unto your Lord is the Returning (*al-ruj‘ā*).** *al-ruj‘ā* means: the recourse, the source to turn to. The implication is: However, you may transgress, become haughty, show self-conceit and assume to be self-sufficient you have to turn to Allah. Elsewhere Allah says: “But he who turns his back, and disbelieves, God shall chastise him with the greatest chastisement. Truly, to Us is their return; then upon Us shall rest their reckoning.” (Q 88:23-6) Since every matter is finally decided by Allah there is no way for anyone to run away from divine decree. Never. Nor is there any escape from Allah’s retribution and justice.

The words of Allah Almighty: **“Surely unto your Lord is the Returning (*al-ruj‘ā*)”** may be more general than a warning and threatening. We mean that these words cover both these senses. It also covers what is more general of the two united. The meaning therefore is: We have to turn to Allah in every matter. For final judgement in the Sharī‘ah matters we have to turn to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah. Allah says: “When you differ among yourself in anything then refer to Allah and the Messenger.” (Q 4:59) In issues relating to cosmic rulings too, a man has to turn to Allah. Allah says: “When you were beseeching your Lord and He listened to you.” (Q 8:9) Therefore, a servant of God has not other shelter to turn to but Allah. Every matter is finally decided by Him. He does what He likes. Even the evils, disputes and wars among the humans are decreed by Allah. However, He has decreed them according to His wisdom. He says: “And had God willed they would not have fought one against the other; but God does whatsoever He desires.” (Q 2:253) Therefore, the words **“Surely unto your Lord is the Returning (*al-ruj‘ā*)”** contain a warning and threaten this man who transgresses whenever he thinks that he is self sufficient and does not need God. This verse also gives a more general and comprehensive message that is, we have the only one source, Allah Almighty, in every matter.

Subsequently Allah says: **What do you think about the one who forbids a servant when he prays.** That is, tell me about the status of the man who behaves this way. Strange is the matter of the person who forbids a servant of Allah when the latter worships Him in ṣalāh. Thus this verse alludes to two persons: the one who forbids and the one who is being stopped from doing something. The person forbidding (the prayer to someone) is Abū Jahl, the transgressor among the Quraysh. The Quraysh called him with the title of Abū al-Ḥakam. They would turn to him for judgement in their disputes. They would turn to him and it made him transgress and suffer self conceitedness. He opposed Islam and died as a kafir as is well known. The Prophet [pbuh] called him Abū Jahl,[5] the father of ignorance contrary to his previous title Abū al-Hakam, father of wisdom. As for the person being prohibited something that is the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. He is the servant referred to in the verse. **“A servant when he prays.”** It was said to Abū Jahl: “Muhammad is offering prayer near Ka’bah in the presence of the people. He puts the people in trial. He stops them from worshipping their gods and idols.” One day he passed there and the Prophet [pbuh] was offering prayer. He was in prostration.

Abū Jahl stopped the Prophet [pbuh] from performing this duty. He said: “Didn’t I forbid you? Why do you do this again?” The Prophet [pbuh] rebuked Abū Jahl and the latter returned. Later on it was reported to Abū Jahl and Muhammad [pbuh] continued offering prayer. At this Abū Jahl swore: “By God

if I found him offering prayer again I shall trample his head under my feet. I will spoil his face in the dust.” Later on he saw the Prophet [pbuh] prostrating under the Ka’bah. He came forward in order to fulfil his vow. When he tried to draw near the Prophet [pbuh], he found between him and the Prophet [pbuh] a ditch of fire separating the two. So he turned back and could not approach the Prophet [pbuh].^[6] The verse says: One wonders over the behaviour of this man who stops another servant of Allah from worshipping him! How can he do that? Due to this very reason it has been said towards the end of this group of verses: “Did he not know that God sees” and He shall put him to retribution and accountability?

Then Allah says: **Do you see if he were upon guidance?** “Do you see” means: Tell me, o addressee, if this person, who prostrates, is on the right guidance. Why do you then stop him from doing the right thing? **“Or bade to god-fearing.”** Some of the Qur’an exegetes have said that the particle “aw, literally meaning or” here gives the meaning of “wa, meaning and”. The implication would be: (wa) And he commands *taqwā*. However, the sounder view is that the particle *aw* has been used in the sense of Or. The implication would thus be this: Don’t you think that he might be on the right guidance in that he prostrates and offers the prayer or in that he commands others to fear God? The reason is that the Prophet [pbuh] would indeed command others to adopt *taqwā*. There is no doubt in that. He was the one who corrected himself and tried to reform others as well.

“Did he not know that God sees?” That is, Allah sees the person being prohibited--the Prophet Muhammad who is prostrating in the prayer and who commands other to adopt *taqwā*. He also sees this transgressing man who stops a servant of God from worshipping Him. **“Did he not know that God sees?”** Allah sees that in both the senses of seeing; sight of mind, that is, knowledge and seeing the real sense. Allah Almighty sees everything no matter how concealed and subtle. He knows everything however far off, little or great. So He knows the person commanding and the person stopping. He knows the person prostrating and the person offering prayer. He knows the transgressor as well and has knowledge of the person who submits before and humbles himself before Allah. He will reward every person for his actions based on His knowledge. The purpose of this statement is to threaten and warn the person who stops the servants of Allah from worshipping Him. It also describes that Allah knows the status of the obedient servants of Him and the transgressor. He will reward and punish each individual on merit. Thus it is a warning and threat to the person who forbids the Messenger of Allah from offering the *ṣalāh*. That is, does this man not know that Allah sees and knows him? His knowledge covers everything. He will put him to retribution either in this world or in the next to come.

Allah says: **No indeed (*kallā*); surely, if he gives not over, We shall seize him by the forelock.** The particle *kallā* in this place means: indeed, truly and surely. It is also possible to take it to express a sense of rebuke for this person who engages in the vile and evil act towards the Prophet [pbuh]. Or it may also mean: Truly. The words “**We shall seize him by the forelock**” are a complement of an oath omitted from mention. If we discover the implied unstated oath the statement would be like this: *By God, if he gives not over, We shall seize him by the forelock.* The complement of the conditional has been left unstated and the complement of the oath has been mentioned. This is a grammatical ruling in the Arabic Language. When an oath and a conditional fall in a single sentence the complement of the latter is omitted. Ibn Mālik says in his *al-Fiyah*:

When a conditional and an oath fall together, omit the complement of the latter in order, as it is necessary.

Here the latter in order is the conditional *la in, if*. The oath is taken to be implied before it which if discovered would be as follows: *By God if he gives not over, We shall seize him by the forelock (al-nāṣiyah).* The meaning of the word “we shall seize him (*la nasfa’an*)” is: We shall hold him with power and strength. The word *nāṣiyah* signifies forelock. The AL prefixing the word is the AL of definiteness. The word *al-nāṣiyah* in this sentence signifies the forelock of Abū Jahl who forbade the Prophet [pbuh] from offering the prayer. That is, we shall hold him by his forelock. Does the verse mean that this holding by the forelock would happen in the life of this world or it will be done in the Hereafter where he will be held from the forelocks and dragged to the fire of Hell? Both these meanings are possible. The words admit of the meaning that his forelock was held tight on the day of the Battle of Badr when he was killed among the polytheists. It is also possible that he shall be held by his forelocks on the Day of Judgment and will be thrown in the Fire of Hell as Allah says: “and they shall be seized by their forelocks and their feet.” (Q 55:41)

Since the verse admits of both the meanings and they are not mutually contradictive we are obliged to take both the implications. This is a known convention and I have already explained it. According to this principle when a verse admits of both the meanings and one of them does not contradict the others then it is obligatory upon us to consider both the meanings together.

Allah says: “**a lying, sinful forelock, *nāṣiyah*, *kādhībah*, *khāṭiyah*.**” *nāṣiyah* is *badal*, replacement, of the previously mentioned *nāṣiyah*. This is *abadl* of a definite noun with an indefinite town. It is conventional in the Arabic Language. The indefinite *nāṣiyah*, has been used so that it can rhyme with the next words

“*kādhībah khāṭīyah.*” The word *kādhībah* means: The one characterized by *kidhb*, falsehood. There is no doubt in that the gravest of all lies is the one committed by the disbelievers who ascribe partners to Allah. This is the gravest lie and the worst action. *khāṭī’ah* means: the one which commits sins knowingly. One needs to appreciate that there is a difference between *khāṭī’* and *mukhṭī’*. *al-khāṭī’* is the one who commits an evil knowingly. *Mukhṭī’* is the one who commits a wrong in ignorance. The latter has an excuse for the wrong he commits. The first however has no valid excuse. Allah says: “None but the sinners (*al-khāṭī’ūn*) would eat it.” (Q 69:37). Allah says: “Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget, or make mistake (*akhta’nā*).” (Q 2:286) The Allah would say to this person: I have (forgiven you).[7]

A similar example of this linguistic nuance is expressed in the terms *al-qāsiṭ* and *al-muqsiṭ*. *Al-qāsiṭ* describes a person who commits oppression. The term *al-muqsiṭ* however means the just. Allah says: and be just (*aqsiṭū*). Surely God loves the just (*muqsiṭīn*). (49:9) Elsewhere He says: “But as for those who have deviated, they have become firewood for Gehenna!” (Q 72:15) Therefore, *khāṭī’ah* implies the one knowingly committing sin. “**So let him call on his concourse** (*Nādiyah*)”. The letter L (the) prefixing the verb (*yad’u*) sentence is used to connote challenge. The implication is: If he is true and he has power and ability then he should call on his concourse. *Al-Nādī* is the assembly place of a people where they get together, discuss things and exchange ideas. Abū Jahl was a prominent leader of the Quraysh. He headed such an assembly place where people would come to meet him and discuss matters. In this verse Allah says: If he is true then he should call on his concourse. There is no doubt in that it is a challenge. It is just as if you challenge your enemy and says: If you have people to support you then let them come forward. These and other similar words are used for putting a challenge.

We shall call on the guards of Hell. That is we have entities that are more powerful than the party of this man. The individuals on the disposal of Allah for this purpose are *al-zabāniyah*, the angel guards of Hell. Allah has, elsewhere, described the angels guarding Hell as harsh (*ghilāz*), terrible (*shidād*). They are strict in their behavior and have immense power. “They don’t disobey God in what He commands them.” (Q 66:6) Rather they do whatever Allah commands them to do. “And do what they are commanded.” (Q 66:6) They don’t fail to follow the command issued to them. Thus Allah has described them with two qualities revealing that they are wholly given to the obedience of Allah. “They don’t disobey God in what He commands them.” They have perfect power: “and do what they are commanded.” There can be two reasons for one to fail to follow Allah’s commands. It can either because

the person commanded has not power to do that or he decides to deliberately disregard the command of Allah. For example there is a man who can't offer prayer while standing. This is because of inability.

There are cases when someone does not follow the command of Allah due to enmity of Allah. However, the angels put in charge of Hell are not disabled. Rather they have the required power and ability. They are not arrogant so that they could disregard Allah's command. Rather they are perfectly humble and submissive before Allah. It is not possible for this *kafir* under discussion, nor for his supporters and nation to combat these *zabāniyah*. This is why Allah says: **We shall call on the guards of Hell.** If someone asks: Where is the final *wāw* of the word *sa nad'u*. I would say that it has been omitted because two unvowelled letters have fallen in a row. *Wāw* in this word is originally vowelless and so is the glottal stop, *hamzah*. If one of the two letters is a 'ṣahīh (consonant)' it takes *kasira*; however, if it is vowel then it is always dropped (from pronunciation and written expression). Ibn Mālik, may Allah bless him, says in his *Alfiyah*:

If two vowelless letters come together in (an expression) the former takes *akasirah*. If it is vowel then it needs to be omitted.

That is, if the two vowelless letters come in a row and the former is a consonant, that it, it is not a vowel, it should be given *kasirah*. An example is the verb *yakun* in the verse: Those who disbelieved would not... (*lam yakun alladhīna kafarū*). The original word is *yakūnu*. When the particle *lam* precedes a verb it turns it into a *jazm* as in the following verse: *lam yakun lahū kufuwan aḥad*; He has no equal. However, in this example the first of the two consecutive vowelless letters is a consonant. This is why it is has been given *akasirah*. If the first of the two letters is a vowel then it is omitted as in *sanad'u al-zabāniyah*.

No indeed (*kallā*); do not obey him, and bow yourself, and draw nigh. Explanation of the word *kallā* has been offered already in the beginning of the surah. The word gives the same sense here as well. The command "do not obey him" is addressed to the Prophet [pbuh] who has been forbidden not to obey the person who prohibits him prayer. Rather, the Prophet [pbuh] should prostrate and not care about what the evil person says. Since the Prophet [pbuh] has been prohibited listening to the distracter, he will be protected by Allah. The implication is: Do what you are commanded. You should not be bothered by this man. Prostrate before the Almighty Allah. By the prostration here is meant the *ṣalāh*. The *ṣalāh* has been alluded to through the words *sajidah* (prostration) because the latter is the foundational part of the former. *Ṣalāh* is not sound if the prostration is missed. The words: **and draw**

nigh. That is, draw near Allah Almighty. The person lying in prostration is the nearest to Allah. Allah’s Messenger [pbuh] said: “The nearest a servant draws to his Lord is when he is offering a prostration (in *ṣalāh*).”[8] The Prophet [pbuh] also said: “Behold, I have been prohibited from reciting the Qur’an while bowing and prostrating. In your bowing posture exalt your Lord. In your prostrations make supplications more and more. Your prayers should be heard.”[9] That is, it is very much expected that your prayers are accepted.

This Surah, al-‘Alaq is a great Surah of the Qur’an. Allah has started His revelation to the Prophet [pbuh] from (the first part of) this very surah. We ask Allah to grant us the ability to obey Him and to draw near Him, and to make us among his friends who fear Allah. May He count us among his prosperous party, and his righteous servants. Indeed He has power to do everything.

[1] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 3, Book of Beginning of Revelation, Chapter: The Beginning of Revelation on the Messenger of God; Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 6982, Book of Interpretation, Chapter: The First Revelation upon the Propheet [pbuh]; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 160 (252), Book of Faith, Chapter: Beginning of Revelation upon the Prophet [pbuh].

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2, Book of Beginning of Revelation, Chapter: The Beginning of Revelation on the Messenger of God; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 160 (254), Book of Faith, Chapter: Beginning of Revelation upon the Prophet [pbuh].

[3] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 6983, Book of Interpretation, Chapter: The Dreams of the Pious; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2261 (1), Book of Dreams, Chapter: Dreams are from Allah and they are the part of the Prophethood.

[4] Reference to this Ḥadīth has already passed in the beginning of this surah.

[5] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 3962, Book of Battles, Chapter: Killing of Abū Jahl; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1800 (118), Book of Jihad, Chapter: Killing of Abū Jahl.

[6] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2797, Book of Characteristics of the Hypocrites, Chapter: Allah’s saying: No indeed; surely Man waxes insolent, for he thinks himself self-sufficient.

[7] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 200 (126), Book of Faith, Chapter: Allah does not account for the mental thoughts.

[8] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 282 (215), Book of Salah, Chapter: What is said in Bowing and Prostrating.

[9] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 479 (207), Book of Salah, Chapter: Prohibition to Recite the Qur’an in Bowing and Prostrating.

Sūrah al-‘Qadr: 97

Verses 1-5

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power. Behold, We sent it down. The pronoun (in the word *innā*, indeed we) refers back to Allah Almighty. The pronoun *Hā* (it) in the word *anzalnā hu*, refers to the Qur’an. The Almighty has used the pronoun of majesty (We, which is generally used for the plural) because He is the Greatest and there is nothing greater than Him. Allah Almighty at times refers to Himself as plural of majesty as has been said in this noble verse: **Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power.** Another example is the saying: “It is We who have sent down the Remembrance, and We watch over it.” (Q 15:9) Yet another example is the following verse: “Surely it is We who bring the dead to life and write down what they have forwarded and what they have left behind; everything We have numbered in a clear register.” (Q 36:11)

At occasions Allah uses the first person singular for Himself: “Verily I am God; there is no god but I; therefore serve Me, and perform the prayer of My remembrance.” (Q 20:14) He uses this style because He is One and the Greatest. When the text intends to highlight the greatness of Allah Almighty He uses the plural of majesty. When the intention is to refer to the singularity of Allah, the first person is used. The pronoun *hu* in the word *anzalnā hu* is the object. The pronoun refers to the Holy Qur’an even if the Book has not been mentioned earlier in the Sūrah. This however is possible because it is a known fact. None doubts the fact that it refers to the revelation of the Qur’an. Allah revealed the book on the Night of Power. The question however is: What does revelation of the Qur’an on the Night of Power mean? The sound view is that it means: We started the revelation of the Qur’an on the Night of Power. There is no doubt in that the Night of Power falls in the Month of Ramadan. This is based on the following verse of the Qur’an: “the month of Ramadan, wherein the Koran was sent down to be guidance to the people.” (Q 2:185)

Thus when we read the verse Q 2:185, that is, “the month of Ramadan, wherein the Koran was sent down” along with the verse “**Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power**” it becomes clear that the Night of Power falls in Ramadan. By this we learn that the view of some people who say that the Night of Power is the fifteenth night of Sha‘bān has no basis. It is unfounded. The Night of Power falls in Ramadan. The fifteenth night of Sha‘bān is just like

the rest of the fifteenth nights of the rest of the months like Rajab, Jamādā, Rabīʿ, Şafar, Muḥarram and others; they have no speciality. The *Ḥadīths* which are cited with regards to the excellence of night vigil during the fifteenth night of Shaʿbān are weak and it is not sound to plead to them. Similarly, the *Ḥadīths* which mention the excellence of fasting the fifteenth day of Shaʿbān are weak and offer no sound basis. However, some scholars, may Allah show mercy to them, are lenient in citing the weak *Ḥadīths* concerning the virtues and excellences of certain things like actions, places, and months.

This is not proper. I stress this because when a weak *Ḥadīth* is quoted proving the excellence of anything the listener would soon start believing that it is a sound *Ḥadīth*. He would ascribe it to the Prophet [pbuh]. This is a grave matter. It is therefore important to learn that the fifteenth day and the fifteenth night of the Month of Shaʿbān are not special. They are like the rest of the months. The fifteenth Night of Shaʿbān should not be spared for the night vigil. This night is not the Night of Power. The fifteenth day of Shaʿbān is not special so that we should offer fast on it. There is no doubt in that it is soundly established that the Prophet [pbuh] would fast most of the days of the Month of Shaʿbān. He would leave only a few days from fasting.[1] As for the rest of the reports about the Prophetic practice, there is nothing sound in them except what has been reported about the three days fasting in each month.[2] These three days are the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth day of the lunar month. These are called the days of bīd.

The words of the Almighty Allah: **on the Night of Power (al-qadr)**. Some of the scholars have said that the word al-qadr means honour, respect, status. They say: X is a man of great honour and status (qadr ʿazīm). Some scholars have held that the word qadr in this verse refers to the predestination and divine decree (taqdīr). This name is given to the night because on this night everything happening the coming year is decreed. These scholars base themselves on the following saying of Allah Almighty: We have sent it down in a blessed night (We are ever warning) therein every wise bidding determined (yufraqu) as a bidding from Us. (Q 44:3-4) Yufraqu means: determined and explicated.

The sound approach in this regard is to consider both the meanings applicable. There is no doubt in that it is a night of great power and status. It is also sure that on this night the affairs of the next year are decided and determined. The matters concerning life, death, provisions and other important matters are decided on this night.

Then Allah says: **And what shall teach thee what is the Night of Power?** This form of expression gives the sense of exaltation and stress on the importance

of the matter. It is very common in the Qur'an. Consider the following verses: And what shall teach thee what is the Day of Doom? Again, what shall teach thee what is the Day of Doom? (Q 82:17-8) The Indubitable! What is the Indubitable? And what will teach thee what is the Indubitable? (Q 69:1-3) The Clatterer! What is the Clatterer? And what shall teach thee what is the Clatterer? (Q 101:1-3) This style of expression couched in the form of a rhetorical question implies exaltation and magnitude of the issue referred to. In this verse Allah says: **And what shall teach thee what is the Night of Power?** The implication is: What taught you about the Night of Power, its status, excellence and exalted position?

Then Allah Himself has explained that it is. He says: **The Night of Power is better than a thousand months.** This sentence works a response to the question preceding it: **And what shall teach thee what is the Night of Power?** The response is: **The Night of Power is better (khayr) than a thousand months.** That is, it is better than a thousand months which don't have a Night of Power in them. It is better in the sense that it is more rewarding for the actions one does during it are rewarded many times more than they are in usual days. It is also better than the rest of the Nights in that on this night Allah sends down good and blessings on this ummah. That is why anyone who spends it in worship with faith and expecting forgiveness all his previous sins are forgiven.

Then Allah mentioned what happens on this night. He says: **in it the angels and the Spirit descend.** That is, they gradually come down. The reason is that that the angels are residents of the heavens. There are seven heavens. The angels slowing and in parties descend on the earth till it is full of them. The descent of the angels on the earth is a sign of mercy, good and blessing for the people of the earth. This is why when we know that at a certain place the angels don't come we conclude that this particular place is void of blessing and good. An example is the place where there are pictures. The angels don't enter the house where there are pictures,^[3] that is, prohibited pictures. This specification is necessary because the majority of the scholars hold that if a picture is on a thing trampled like the ones on the floor or the mattress it is allowable. Therefore, the angels don't avoid entering such place. If the angels would avoid visiting such a place these pictures too would be prohibited. Thus the angels descend on the Night of Power in great number. Their descent is a great blessing and goodness.

And the Spirit (Rūḥ). Al-Rūḥ is the Angel Jibrīl. Allah has particularly mentioned his name due to his excellence and high status. The divine words: "by the leave of their Lord" mean: His command. The permission of God in this sentence implies the cosmic permission. (It is not verbal and stated). The

permission of God, that is, His command, is of two kinds: A cosmic command and a verbal expressed command. Allah says: Or have they associates who have laid down for them a religion that for which God gave not leave? (*lam yadhan bi hi*) (Q 42: 21) The meaning is: Allah has not commanded as a legal ruling. However, it is allowed in Allah's cosmic rulings. Thus the referred to acts have been issued by someone other than Allah while Allah has not issued any such legal command. It is a cosmic command. Therefore, this verse, that is, "by the leave of their Lord", means: By His cosmic command.

The words "upon every command (*min kulli amrin*)". It has been said: *min* in this sentence has been used to give the meaning of *man*, that is, with every ruling Allah has issued and sent them with. We don't know the reality of this command. It is not clear to us. We don't know with precision what it refers to. We however declare that the descent of the angels on the earth implies descent of good, mercy and blessings. "Peace it is." This sentence (*salamunhiya*) is constituted of a *mubtada* and a *khbar*. The *khbar* has been pre-positioned. The original order would be: *hiya salamun*, that is, this is the night of peace. The Almighty has described this night as peace because of abundance and magnitude of those who remain safe from sins and the retribution. Allah's Prophet [pbuh] has said: "The one who spends the Night of Power in worship with faith and expecting forgiveness all his previous sins are forgiven." [4] The forgiveness of sins definitely means one remains safe from the punishment for these sins.

Till the rising of dawn. That is, the angels continue descending on this night till the rising of the dawn; when the dawn appears the Night of Power ends.

Important point: We have already stated that the Night of Power falls in the month of Ramadan. The question remains: in which part of the month does it lie? In the beginning, middle or the last part of it?

In response to this question we say: The Prophet [pbuh] has observed the first part of Ramadan in retreat (*i'tikāf*) in order to find the Night. He also observed *i'tikāf* during the middle days for the purpose. Then it was revealed to him: The Night falls in the last ten days of the month. Therefore, he observed *i'tikāf* in the last ten days. [5] Therefore, the Night of Power is one of the last ten nights of Ramadan. The question now remains: Which night is it? God knows best. It can be the twenty-first night of Ramadan, or the thirtieth night or anyone in between these two. It has not been precisely marked for each year. This is why the Prophet [pbuh] once had a vision that it is the twenty-first night of the month. He saw in his dream that he was prostrating in the last part of the night in water and earth. There was a rain on that night. The Prophet [pbuh] stayed that night, awake, offering prayer in his mosque.

The roof of the mosque was made of thatches that can't prevent water from dripping through it. Therefore, the Prophet [pbuh] prostrated on water and mud in the morning prayer of that particular night. The Companions [pbuh] could clearly see the signs of water and mud on the forehead of the Prophet [pbuh]. (Thus the dream the Prophet [pbuh] saw proved true.)[6] During that year the Night of Power fell on the twenty-first night of the month of Ramadan.

Moreover, the Prophet [pbuh] said: "Seek (the Night of Power) during the last ten days of (Ramadan)."[7] According to another version of the *Ḥadīth* the Prophet [pbuh] said: "Seek it during the odd nights of the last ten days." [8] One year the Companions dreamed that the Night of Power matched one of the last seven days of Ramadan. The Prophet [pbuh] said: "I notice that the your dreams concur that the Night falls in the last seven days. So whoever is eager to find it he should try the last seven days." [9] That is, during that particular year. (It is not a general guidance applicable to all the years). As for the rest of the years then it is to be found in the last ten days of the month. Thus is it not specifically determined and finalized. The most probable night is the twenty-seventh night. It may change year to year. For example this year it falls on the twenty-seventh night of the month. The next year it might match the twenty-first night of the month. In the next year it might be twenty-fifth night so on and so forth. The Almighty has kept the identity ambiguous for two great points of benefit:

The First Benefit: To distinguish the true seeker of this night from the lazy ones. The true seeker does not find it difficult to engage in worship and tire himself for ten days in search for it. The lazy one finds it tiring and impossible to stay awake and worship for ten nights merely in order to find one night.

The Second Benefit: It would yield the Muslims abundant reward through abundant deeds; the reward increases with increase in righteous actions.

It would not be out of place to point out a mistake committed by many people today. They try to specify the twenty-seventh night for the performance of 'umrah. That is why you see that on the twenty-seventh night the Sacred Mosque is full of people as they grow in number. It is an innovation to specify the twenty-seventh night for 'umrah. The Prophet [pbuh] did not specify the twenty-seventh night of Ramadan for the performance of 'umrah during any year in his practice. He did not express any such specification verbally. Thus he did not offer 'umrah during the twenty-seventh night of Ramadan even though he was in Makkah on that day during the year of the Conquest. He did not command us to remain engaged in worship on the twenty-seventh night or to do 'umrah on that night. This explains the untenability of the practice of

many people. This also explains that generations of people take religious practices from generations and this continues for many generations while there is no basis of the practice in the sources of the religion. Therefore, you should fear worshipping Allah without basing on firm knowledge; an argument from the Book of God, or the Sunnah of His Messenger, or the practice of the Righteous Caliphs whose sunnah we are obliged to follow.

This Sūrah mentions many virtues and excellences of the Night of Power.

The First Virtue: It is only this night that the Almighty has revealed the Holy Qur'an which is the guidance for humans. It is the source of blessing for them in this life and the one to come.

The Second Virtue is the one to which the rhetorical question “**And what shall teach thee what is the Night of Power?**” points; it implies exaltation and high status of the night.

The Third Virtue of the night is that it is better than a thousand months.

The Fourth Virtue of the night is that the angels descend on that night. They always descend with good, blessing and mercy.

The Fifth Virtue is that it is peace as during this night there are abundant opportunities to be safe from punishment. This happens due to the fact that servants of Allah stay in worship in obedience to Allah's commands.

The Sixth Virtue of the Night of Power is that Allah has revealed a whole Sūrah expressing its importance. This sūrah will continue to be recited till the Day of Judgment.

The virtues of the Night of Power have also been explained in some of the *Ḥadīths*. There is a sound *Ḥadīth* in the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim and the *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurayrah [rta]. He says that the Prophet [pbuh] said: “He who spends the Night of Power in worship with faith (*īmānan*) and expects reward (*iḥtisāban*) all of his previous sins are forgiven.”[10] The words *īmānan* and *iḥtisāban* mean: Believing in Allah and in what He has promised about rewarding the people who would spend it in worship. Expecting reward (*iḥtisāban*) means: One expects and seeks reward by this action. This reward is promised to those who know of this promise or not. The Prophet [pbuh] did not make it a condition for the reward that the person knows that he has been promised reward for the action he is doing. With this the commentary on Sūrah al-Qadr comes to an end.

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- [1] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 1969, Book of Fasting, Chapter: Fasting the Month of Sha‘bān; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1156 (175-6), Book of Fasting, Chapter: Fasting of the Prophet [pbuh] during Ramadan and other months and desirability of fasting (some days) each month.
- [2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 1981, Book of Fasting, Chapter: Fasting the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and the Fifteenth days of the lunar month; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1160 (194), Book of Fasting, Chapter: *Istihbāb* of Fasting three days in each month.
- [3] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 5960, Book of Dresses, Chapter: The Angels don’t enter the house in which there are pictures in it; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2106, Book of Dresses and Embellishment, Chapter: Prohibition of Human Pictures and that the angels don’t enter the house where there are pictures or a dog.
- [4] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2114, Virtue of the Night of Power, Chapter: Virtue of the Night of Power; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 760 (175), Book of Prayer of the Travellers, Chapter: Encouragement upon Worshipping during the Nights of Ramadan which is *Tarāwīḥ*.
- [5] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 813, Book of *Adhān* (the call to prayer), Chapter: Prostrations; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1167 (215), Book of Fasting, Chapter: Virtue of the Night of Power.
- [6] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2016, Book of Virtues of the Night of Power, Chapter: Seeking the Night of Power during the last seven days of Ramadan; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1167 (213), Book of Fasting, Chapter: Virtue of the Night of Power and encouragement upon seeking it.
- [7] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2021, Book of Virtue of the Night of Power, Chapter: Seeking the Night of Power during the last ten odd nights of Ramadan; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1165 (213), Book of Fasting, Chapter: Virtue of the Night of Power and encouragement upon seeking it.
- [8] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2017, Book of Virtue of the Night of Power, Chapter: Seeking the Night of Power during the last ten odd nights of Ramadan; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1165 (210), Book of Fasting, Chapter: Virtue of the Night of Power and encouragement upon seeking it.
- [9] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2015, Book of Virtue of the Night of Power, Chapter: Seeking the Night of Power during the last seven nights of Ramadan; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1165 (205), Book of Fasting, Chapter: Virtue of the Night of Power and encouragement upon seeking it.
- [10] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2114, Virtue of the Night of Power, Chapter: Virtue of the Night of Power; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 760 (175), Book of Prayer of the Travelers, Chapter: Encouragement upon Worshipping during the Nights of Ramadan which is *Tarāwīḥ*.

Sūrah al-Bayyinah: 98

Verses 1-5

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Allah Almighty says: **“The unbelievers of the People of the Book and the idolaters would never leave off.”** That is, the disbelievers among **the People of the Book**, that is, the Jews and the Christians. They have been called by this name because the divine books sent to their Prophets were still extant at the time of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. However, these books went through changes and adulteration. Yet they are called the People of the Book. The Jews had the Torah and the Christians the Gospels. **And the idolaters.** The term idolaters (*mushrikūn*) is used to refer to the worshippers of idols from every group including the Israelites and the others.

Leave off (*mufakkīn*). That is, they would not abandon polytheism and disbelief they are following **till the Clear Sign (*al-bayyinah*) came to them.** *al-Bayyinah* is applied to everything that defines the truth in every matter. Anything that is used to clarify and establish the truth can be called *bayyinah*. This is why the Prophet [pbuh] said: “To produce evidence (*bayyinah*) is the duty of the claimant.”[1] Thus everything that clarifies and evidences the truth is *bayyinah*. The nature of evidence in different matters is sought according to the requirement of the case. What then is the *bayyinah* Allah has referred to here? Allah has Himself explained this. He says: **“A Messenger from God.”** This Messenger is the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh], son of ‘Abd Allah, the Hashimi, Qurayshite, may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him! The word *rasūl* has been put as indefinite noun implying his great status. It is only appropriate to exalt and glorify the Prophet [pbuh] according to his status without adding or subtracting anything. **“A Messenger from God.”** That is, Allah has sent him as a Messenger to the worlds, to warn the people and give them glad tiding. Allah says: “We sent you as a Messenger to the people.” (Q 4:79) He also says: “Blessed be He who has sent down the Salvation upon His servant, that he may be a warner to all beings.” (Q 25:1)

The Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] is a Messenger sent by Allah. He has been given the message through the angel Jibrīl [pbuh]. Jibrīl [pbuh] is the Messenger of God to all the Prophets of Allah (among humans). He is given the duty to communicate the revelation to the men Allah has chosen. **“Reciting pages purified.”** That is, he is reciting these scriptures for himself and reads them out to others. “*Suḥuf* (pages)” is the plural of the word *ṣaḥīfah* which is

used to refer to a page or a parchment or anything similar used as writing material. **Purified, muṭṭahharah.** That is, pure of polytheism, bad morals, and everything that is bad. This is a pure and sacred. **Therein (fī hā).** That is, in these scriptures are **true Books (kutub qayyimah).** **kutub:** that is, the written material is very precious. *Kutub* is plural of *kitāb* which is used to mean the written message. The implication is: These parchments contain pure and precious messages written by Allah Himself.

It is an acknowledged fact that when a man studies the Holy Qur'an he finds it exactly as it is described by Allah. One finds that it contains messages of great value. Consider the Qur'anic teachings about the unicity of Allah (*tawhīd*), His praises, glorification, and exaltation. It is full of such messages. Take a look at the Qur'anic description of the Prophet [pbuh] and Companions, emigrants and the Helpers, and the successors. Study the Qur'anic rulings to offer the *ṣalāh*, pay the *zakāh*, observe fasts, perform hajj and other great moral teachings. You will see that whatever the Qur'an contains is invaluable. It also lends importance to the other (the reader). **"In it are true Books (kutub qayyimah.)"** The Almighty has informed us in this verse that it is not possible for these disbelieving men from among the People of the Book and the polytheists to abandon their religion and faith until the *bayyinah* comes to them. But did they abandon and part from their disbelief and polytheism after the *bayyinah* reached them? The Almighty has responded to this question and has said:

And they scattered not, those that were given the Book, excepting after the Clear Sign came to them. That is, when the clear sign came to them, they differed. Some of them believed and some disbelieved. There were men among the Christians who believed like the Negus, the king of Abyssinia. Some of the Jews also believed. An example is 'Abd Allah b. Sallām, [rta]. Thus there were people among them who believed and people who disbelieved. The ones about whom Allah knew that they intended good and wanted to follow the religion were given the capability to accept the faith. Those who did not have that good in them were let to follow disbelief. The same happened to the polytheists. A great number of them believed. Thus before the advent of the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] people remained disbelievers till the clear sign came to them. When the clear sign reached them they differed. Allah says: "Be not as those who scattered and fell into variance after the clear signs came to them; those there awaits a mighty chastisement." (Q 3:105)

Verses 6-8

The unbelievers of the People of the Book and the idolaters shall be in the Fire of Gehenna, therein dwelling forever; those are the worst of creatures. Allah

has explained and stressed the explication that the disbelievers from among the polytheists and the People of the Book are destined to be **in the Fire of Gehenna**. That is, the Fire which is called *Jahannam*. This fire has been named *jahannam* because of the depth of its ditches and its blackness. The word is derived from *al-juhmah* (gloom). It has also been said that the word is non-Arabic which has been naturalized into Arabic. Regardless of the origin of the word *jahannam*, it is one of the names of the Fire. The divine words: **“The unbelievers of (min) the People of the Book and the idolaters.”** The word *min* in this sentence has been used for the sake of explication of the ambiguity found in the words “those who disbelieved (*inna alladhīna kafarū*”. This necessitates that the People of the Book, that is, the Jews and the Christians, are disbelievers (*kuffār*). This is true.

The Jews are *kuffār* because they did not believe in the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad [pbuh]. This is in spite of their claim that they believe in Allah and the Last Day. They pray to Allah to show mercy upon their dead ones. They also use other such statements and in all this they are lying. Were they true believers in Allah and the Last Day, they would have believed in the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. Rather they would have believed in their own Messengers. (They did not believe in the latter as well) as the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] has been described in the Torah and the Gospels. Allah says in Surah A'rāf: “Those who follow the Messenger, 'the Prophet of the common folk, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Gospel bidding them to honour, and forbidding them dishonour, making lawful for them the good things and making unlawful for them the corrupt thing.” (Q 7:157)

Jesus Christ [pbuh] said to the Children of Israel: “Children of Israel, I am indeed the Messenger of God to you, confirming the Torah that is before me, and giving good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.” (Q 61:6) When this promised Messenger, foretold by Jesus [pbuh], appeared, they said: This is a clear magic. They belied him. None but a few among the Jews and the Christians followed him. Only a few individuals believed in the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] and followed him.

Those are the worst of creatures (*sharr al-bariyyah*). That is, the worst of all of Allah's creations. The word *bariyyah* means: creatures. This means that the disbelieving humans from among the Jews, the Christians and the polytheists are the worst of creatures. This has further been explained by the Almighty in the following saying: “Surely the worst of beasts in God's sight are the unbelievers, who will not believe.” (Q 8:55) Elsewhere He says: “Surely the worst of beasts in God's sight are those that are deaf and dumb and do not understand. If God had known of any good in them He would have made them

hear; and if He had made them hear, they would have turned away, swerving aside.” (Q 8:22-3) Thus these disbelievers from among the Jews, the Christians and the polytheists are the worst of all the creatures. Since they are the worst of creatures, we can expect only evil from them. It is only evil that can come out of the evil men. It is never possible for us to expect good from them. At times we believe in the truthful among them the way the Prophet [pbuh] trusted a polytheist, Abd Allah b. Arīqat. The Prophet [pbuh] hired his services as a guide leading the way to Madinah during the Migration.[2] However, their majority and the masses are not to be trusted. They are evil.

Since Allah has mentioned the disbelievers from among the Jews, the Christians and the polytheists in the verses above He has now mentioned the status of the believers. He says: **But those who believe, and do righteous deeds, those are the best of creatures.** The Holy Qur’an calls itself *al-mathānī*, it presents a theme and brings its opposite as well. When it discusses the people of Hell it introduces the people of jannah as well; it juxtaposes the verses of threats with the verses of encouragement; so on and so forth. This is done so that man travels to Allah Almighty in fear and hope. He may not get bored. The variety in styles of expression and contexts gives one a power and source of protection contrary to the monotonous style of expression which leaves the reader bored and inactive.

But those who believe, and do righteous deeds, those are the best of creatures. The best of creatures of Allah are the people who believe and do righteous deeds. They are divided in four groups as has been explained by the Qur’an in the following verses: “Whosoever obeys God, and the Messenger -- they are with those whom God has blessed, Prophets, just men, martyrs, the righteous.” (Q 4:69) These are the four groups of the believers. The loftiest group is that of the Prophets [pbut] of Allah. The noblest of the groups of the Prophets is the group of the Rasūls. The status of the *ṣiddīqs* comes next to that of the Prophets. Abū Bakr Siddiq is at the top in this group. This group is followed by the martyrs (*shuhadā’*). The *shuhadā’* in this context, it is said, refers to the people of knowledge. It has also been said that it is a reference to the people who are martyred in the way of Allah. The verse however admits of both the meanings as these meanings are not mutually exclusive. The *mufassir* of the Qur’an should see if a verse admits of two different but non-contradictory meanings he should take both of them. Thus the *shuhadā’* in this verse covers those who are martyred in the way of Allah and also those who have knowledge. All of them have a great status among the rest of the followers of the Messengers except for the *ṣiddīqīn*. Allah says: *wa al-ṣāliḥīn*, the righteous, the pious. They are at the lowest level among these four classes. To conclude the believers who do righteous deeds are divided in

different statuses yet they are all the best of the creatures of God. They are the best among all the creations of God.

Then the Almighty explains their reward. He says: **their recompense is with their Lord -- Gardens of Eden, underneath which rivers flow, therein dwelling forever and ever.** In this verse Allah has praised those who believe and do righteous deeds before making mention of the reward waiting for them. That Allah praises them brings them more honour than any other reward. This is why He has mentioned the praise before referring to the reward they will have on the Last Day. He says: “their recompense is with their Lord -- Gardens (*jannāt*) of Eden.” The Gardens have been put in plural form in order to refer to the varieties of Paradise. The Prophet [pbuh] said that the Gardens are “two gardens, the utensils and the contents of which are of silver, and two other gardens, the utensils and contents of which are of gold.”[3] The following noble verse also refers to this very fact: “But such as fears the Station of his Lord, for them shall be two gardens.” (Q 55:46) A little later, in the same Surah, Allah explains the nature and characteristics of these two Gardens in the following words: “And besides these shall be two gardens.” (Q 55:55)

These righteous believers shall have the Gardens. The gardens which Allah has promised as reward to the believers who do righteous deeds signify the great mansions prepared by Him for the believers who are God-fearing. In these Gardens there are blessings which have never seen by any eye, nor heard of by any ear. It has never been imagined by any human being. It is not possible for anyone in this world to imagine the howness (nature and reality) of the blessings of the Afterlife. It is beyond and above our imagination. Ibn ‘Abbās [rta] said: “There is nothing of the things of the world in the Paradise except the names.”[4] The realities of things differ greatly. Allah says: *jannāt ‘adnīn* (eternal gardens). The word *al-‘adn* means stay in a place permanently and not departing it. The perfection of the blessings of Paradise also implies that none of its dwellers will ever desire that the blessings he enjoys are changed. This is because the dweller thinks that nothing is more perfect than the blessing he has. He does not think that what he is having is defective in any sense as compared to any better and more perfect form of the blessing. Allah says: “desiring no removal out of them.” (Q 18:105) That is, they would not desire removal of the blessings they would be enjoying. This is because they will be made content upon what they have been granted by Allah. They will never think that anyone would have a better blessing than they have. This is why Allah has called these gardens eternal gardens.

Underneath which rivers flow. About the words “underneath which, *min taḥti hā*” the scholars have said that it means: under their trees and mansions. Otherwise the rivers flow on the surface. It is not below the surface. These

rivers flow under the mansions and the trees. The rivers have been left unexplained in this verse. The Almighty has explained these in Surah Muhammad. He says: “This is the similitude of Paradise which the godfearing have been promised: therein are rivers of water unstaling, rivers of milk unchanging in flavour, and rivers of wine -- a delight to the drinkers, rivers, too, of honey purified.” (Q 47:15) Some historical relics and reports have described these rivers further. It has been reported that they run not through deep passages.[5] They run on the surface of the earth turning to where man wants them to turn. It does not need digging the passages in the earth. Nor do they require building walls around them in order to stop water from spilling over to the right or the left. Ibn Qayyim, may Allah bless him, says in his work al-Nūniyyah:

The rivers (in the Paradise) run without furrows. Pure is the Lord who keeps them from spilling over.

Therein dwelling for ever and ever. That is, they shall dwell in it for ever. They will not die. Nor will they suffer a disease. Nor will they get disappointed. They will never feel pain and experience sorrow. They will never feel tired. They will remain enjoying the perfect blessings forever and ever.

God is well-pleased with them, and they are well-pleased with Him. This is the most perfect blessing of Allah Almighty upon the believers that He is pleased with them. His pleasure is opened up for them. He shall never be angry with them. Rather they shall be looking at the countenance of their Lord with their very eyes the way they see the moon when it is in its full bloom. They would be in doubt about that. Nor will they have any confusion about the sight. They will not need to rush upon each other in order to see Allah. Everyone will be able to see Him from his very station according to the will of Allah.

Then Allah says: **that is for him who fears (khashiya) his Lord.** That is, this reward is reserved for those who fear (yakhshā) Allah Almighty. The fear intended here is the one which a person believing in Allah feels while sensing respect and glorification of Him. It is not possible to occur except to those who know Allah. Allah Almighty says: “Even so only those of His servants fear God who have knowledge; surely God is All-mighty, All-forgiving.” (Q 35:28) The implication is it is only those who know His exalted status and His perfect rule that fear Him the most. Thus the word *khashyah* is more specific than the word *khawf*. This difference between the two terms can be explicated with the help of an example:

When you fear (feel *khawf*) from someone you don't know if he has power over you or not. This is called *khawf*. When you fear someone who you know has power over you then this fear is called *khashyah*. [6] With this concludes the commentary of this great Surah of the Qur'an; I have written what Allah made easy for me to write in this regards. We ask Allah to make us among those who recite the Book the way it should be recited indeed He has power to do everything.

[1] al-Jāmi ' al-Tirmidhī, No: 1341, Chapter on Legal Rulings, Chapter: What has been said on that it is upon the claimant to produce witness.

[2] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 3905, Book of Virtues of the Helpers, Chapter: Migration of the Prophet [pbuh] and his companions to Madinah;

[3] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 4878, Book Prophetic Commentary on the Qur'an, Chapter: The divine saying: and two other gardens.

[4] Reference to this report has already passed. See page 136.

[5] Reference to this report has already passed. See page 136.

[6] For detail see the explication of the three principles (*thalātha al-uṣūl*) by the respected Shaykh, may Allah bless him.

Sūrah al-Zalzalah: 99

Verses 1-5

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

When earth is shaken with a mighty shaking (*zilzāla hā*). The intended message in this verse is the same as depicted in the following saying of Almighty: “O men, fear your Lord! Surely the earthquake of the Hour is a mighty thing; on the day when you behold it, every suckling woman shall neglect the child she has suckled, and every pregnant woman shall deposit her burden, and you shall see mankind drunk, yet they are not drunk, but God's chastisement is terrible.” (Q 22:1-2) The words *zilzāla hā* mean: The mighty shaking which has no parallel. This is why Allah has described the situation as follows: “and you shall see mankind drunk, yet they are not drunk.” The implication is that they seem such due to the extremity of the situation in which they have lost consciousness for what has struck them. They seem to you as if they are drunk. In reality they are in sound health. It is only the extreme loss of consciousness that makes a man seem as if he is drunk and does not know how he behaves and what he does.

and earth brings forth her burdens. The burdens in this verse refer to the dwellers in the graves. When the trumpet is blown everyone in the heavens and the earth will fall down except the ones Allah wills. Then it will be blown another time and everyone will get up alive. They will come out of their graves proceeding to the Lord of the worlds as Allah says: “unto a mighty day a day when mankind shall stand before the Lord of all Being?” (Q 83:6)

and Man (*insān*) says, 'What ails her?' The word *insān* has been used in the sense of genre, mankind. That is man will say: what happened to her? What is the matter with this shaking? This is because he will come out of the grave as Allah describes “as a drunk.” He shall say: What has happened to the earth and what is the matter with it? This he will utter due to the extreme fear.

upon that day, that is, on the day the earth will be shaken, **she shall tell her tidings.** That is, the earth shall describe what good or bad acts people did on it. It has been soundly attributed to the Prophet [pbuh] that he said that when a Mu’adhdhin (the one who calls to prayer) makes a call to the prayer everything that hears him including the trees, stones and clods of mud and everything else will bear witnesses to his calling on the Last Day.[1] Thus the earth shall testify what good or bad has been done on its back. This witness

will be called only to explain that Allah is just. Allah does not hold the people into account except for the deeds they do. Otherwise, Allah's knowledge covers everything. It suffices for retribution that He says to His servants: You did such and such actions. However, in order to establish justice and making the criminal confess his crime Allah will make things testify against him. The criminals will reject that they were polytheists for example. Allah says: "Then they shall have no proving, but to say, 'By God our Lord, we never associated other gods with You.'" (Q 6:23) They will see that the monotheists have been saved from punishment they will claim that they were not involved in polytheism. They will do so, anticipating salvation. However, their mouths will be sealed. Their hands however will speak up. Their feet, skins and their tongues will testify against the man and describe what he has been doing. At this point the criminal will not be able to disown his deeds. Rather he will confess and admit his doings. However, the remorse on his deeds will not benefit him at that time.

The divine statement "**upon that day she shall tell her tidings**" corresponds to the condition found in "When the earth is shaken with a mighty shaking and the earth brings forth her burdens, and Man says, 'What ails her?'"

The words: **for that your Lord has inspired her**. That is, she will do so because Allah revealed it to her, that is, He allows her to speak out and give the news. Allah has power to do anything. When He commands an entity to do something it must happen. Allah addresses the inanimate things and they call out. This is established from the following saying of Allah: "Then He lifted Himself to heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth, "Come willingly, or unwillingly!" They said, "We come willingly." (Q 41:11) Allah said to pen: "Write." It asked: "O Lord what may I write?" Allah commanded: "Write what is going to happen till the Day of Judgment." [2] Allah also says: "Today We set a seal on their mouths, and their hands speak to Us, and their feet bear witness as to what they have been earning." (Q 36:65) When Allah Almighty addresses to something be it an inanimate object it talks to Allah in return. This is why Allah says: "upon that day she shall tell her tidings for that your Lord has inspired her."

His saying: **Upon that day**. That is, on the day the earth will be shaken with a mighty shaking. **men shall issue in scatterings** (*ashtātā*). That is, they will issue in different scattered parties. They will issue forth heading to their destination. The dwellers of Jannah, may Allah count us among them, shall head to Jannah. The people of Hell, may Allah protect us from it, shall be dragged to it. Allah says: "On the day that We shall muster the God-fearing to the All-merciful with pomp and drive the evildoers into Gehenna herding, having no power of intercession, save those who have been taken with the All-

merciful covenant.” (Q 19:85-7) Thus the people will proceed in parties and groups distributed in sections hugely differing. Allah says: “Behold, how We prefer some of them over others! And surely the world to come is greater in ranks, greater in preferment.” (Q 17:21)

to see their works. That is they shall issue in scattering so that they can see their deeds. Allah will make them see their actions according to their origin. If the actions would be good they will find them good. If they would be evil they will find evil. This would happen according to strict measure and written record. Man will be given his account of deeds either in his right hand or in his left hand. Then he will be subjected to accountability in the light of this record. Allah shall subject him to accountability. As for the believers Allah will call him in private. He will make the believer confess his sins. He will say you did and that. The man will confess and admit. When he will believe that he has been destroyed Allah will say to him: “I covered your doings in the life of the world and today I forgive you.”[3] As for the disbeliever, may Allah save us from disbelief, he shall not be treated like that. Rather it will be openly declared: “Those are they who lied against their Lord.’ Surely the curse of God shall rest upon the evildoers.” (Q 11:18)

And the words “their actions” in “so that they can see their actions” is a genitive construction which implies generality. The apparent meaning of the sentence is that they will be made to see all their actions, small and big, minor and major. It is true. The only exception is the deeds which Allah has already forgiven due to the good deeds the believer does or due to supplication for forgiveness. Such deeds Allah shall remove from his record. Allah says: “surely the good deeds will drive away the evil deeds. That is a remembrance unto the mindful.” (Q 11:114) So man will see his deeds. He will see the minor and the major deeds so that the matter becomes clear to him. The record of his deeds will be handed over to him. It will be said to him: “Read your book! Your soul suffices you this day as a reckoner against you.” (Q 17:14) Therefore, a man should not do anything that does not please Allah. He should know that everything is being recorded for him. He shall be held accountable for it.

And whoso (*man*) has done an atom's weight of (*mithqāl dharrah*) good shall see it, and whoso has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it. The particle *man* is conditional and implies generality. That is, every man doing an atom’s weight of an act shall see it regardless of the matter the action is good or evil. The expression *mithqāla dharrah* means: weight of *adharrah*. The word *dharrah* refers to the smaller ants as is well known. The word *dharrah* does not mean atom as is claimed by some. The *dharrah* in the sense of atom known today was not known to the people to whom the Qur’an was revealed. Allah does not address people in a language is that is not

understandable to the addressees. The term *dharrah* has been used because it was used as a simile for littleness in the Arabic language. It is just as Allah says at another place: "Surely God shall not wrong so much as the weight of an ant (*dharrah*)." (Q 4:40) It is a known fact that any action one does, even if it is smaller than an ant, he shall see it. But it is used only to signify littleness as was used an expression for this theme. Allah says: **And whoso (*man*) has done an atom's weight of (*mithqāl dharrah*) good shall see it.**

The divine words "***mithqāl dharrah***" lead us to conclude that it is the actions which shall be weighed. This is the issue subject to difference of opinion among the scholars.

There are scholars who say that it is the action which shall be weighed. There are scholars who believe that the register of the good deeds shall be weighed. Some others say that the person doing the deeds shall be weighed.

Every group has an argument to establish their view. As for those who say that it is action which shall be weighed base themselves on this verse: **And whoso (*man*) has done an atom's weight of (*mithqāl dharrah*).** The actual sentence is: Whoever does a deed weighing equal to an ant. They also plead to the following saying of the Prophet [pbuh]: "There are two statements that are light for the tongue to remember, heavy in the Scales and are dear to the Merciful: '*Subhan-Allahi wa bihamdihi, Subhan-Allahil-Azim [Glory be to Allah and His is the praise, (and) Allah, the Greatest is free from imperfection]*'." [4]

There is a difficulty in this view. Action is not a body so that it can be put on a scale and then weighed. Rather it is an action which has just passed.

There are explanations to this problem.

First, a man is obliged to affirm and believe in what has been told to us by Allah and His Messenger concerning the affairs of the unseen. He has to submit if the issue is not acceptable to his reason. Reason can find it strange and say: How is that possible? But he should affirm it. The power of Allah is beyond our imagination and comprehension. It is necessary for a Muslim to submit to what has been told to him. He should not ask: How? The affairs of the unseen are beyond the reach of our reason and mind.

Second, Allah shall grant these actions bodies which can be put on the scale and will prove heavy or light. Allah has the power to give the ideas body. It has been soundly reported from the Prophet [pbuh] that death shall be brought out in the form of a ram. It will be made to stand between the heaven and the hell. Then it will be declared: O inmates of Paradise! They will raise

their necks and look up. Then it will be said: O people of the Fire. They too will raise their necks and look up. It will be said to them: Do you recognize it? They will say: Yes. It is death. This is in spite of the fact that it was put in the form of a ram. Death has no body. It is a conceptual thing. However, Allah will make it take up a body on the Last Day. The people will say: It is death. Death will then be slaughtered in front of them. It will then be said: “O inmates of Paradise, there is an everlasting life for you and no death. O inmates of Hell-Fire, there is an everlasting living for you and no death.”[5] This explains away the problem with this viewpoint.

As for those who say that it is the record registers that will be weighed they plead to the ḥadīth of the owner of the scrolls. This will be given a satchel on the Last Day. It will be said to him: Look at your deeds. He will be given scrolls in which his bad deeds will be recorded. These will be a huge material. He will think that he has been destroyed. Then he will be given another small scroll. In it will be written: There is no god but Allah. He will ask: O Allah, what is this card compared to those scrolls? It will be said to him: You will not be treated unjustly in the least. Then the scrolls will be placed in one side of the Balance and the card in the other. The scrolls will go up (i.e., be light) and the card will go down (i.e., will weigh heavily); the card in which it is written: There is no god but Allah.[6] So this group of scholars hold that this ḥadīth proves that it is the material upon which the actions are written that will be weighed.

Those who hold that the person himself will be weighed plead to the ḥadīth of Abd Allah b. Mas‘ūd [rta]. He reports that one day he was with the Prophet [pbuh]. A fierce wind blew. ‘Abd Allah b. Mas‘ūd [rta] stood up. The wind almost blew him as he had weak feet and calves. The people started laughing. The Prophet [pbuh] said: “What makes you laugh? What is strange? By God in whose hands is my life, his two calves are heavier than anyone else’s in the scale.” [7] This proves that it will be the person under accountability who shall be weighed (and not his deeds or the scrolls).

We say: We accept the first view. It is the deeds that will be weighed. However, it is also possible (that as an exception) the registers of some will be weighed and similarly some men will themselves be weighed.

Someone may ask: does not the view that it is the man himself who shall be weighed imply that it is based on the body weight of the people in this world. The men of huge bodies will weigh heavy on the Last Day.

Our response to this question follows: This weighing is not based on the weight of the human bodies in this world. It has been reported on the authority of Abu Hurayrah [rta] that the Prophet [pbuh] said: “A man of heavy

stout body shall be brought who shall weigh in the scale of Allah less than a mosquito.”[8]The Prophet [pbuh] also said: “Read: and on the Day of Resurrection We shall not assign to them any weight.” (Q 18:105) Consider what the Prophet [pbuh] said about Abd Allah b. Mas‘ūd [rta]. He said: “His two calves shall weigh more than anybody’s weight.” Thus the body shall weigh less or more according to the righteous deeds of the person involved. Allah says: **And whoso (man) has done an atom's weight of (mithqāl dharrah) good shall see it, and whoso has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it.**

This Surah in its entirety contains warnings and frightens us from the great quake. It also encourages us upon doing the righteous deeds. It also implies that even the smallest act counts and does not go in waste. Even an action weighing equal to an ant or lesser shall be weighed and considered. Man shall definitely see it. He shall be informed about it on the Last Day. We beseech Allah to make our end in good, blessing, prosperity and success. We ask Him to make us among the people who shall be raised to the Almighty in groups. He has power over everything.

[1] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 609, Book of Adhān, Chapter: Raising Voice in Calling to the Prayer.

[2] Sunan Abu Dāwūd, No: 4700, Book of al-Sunnah, Chapter: Concerning Predestination; Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī, No: 2155, Book on Chapters about Predestination, Chapter: Importance of Belief in the Predestination.

[3] Reference to this hadith has already passed see: page 53.

[4] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 6406, 6683, Book of Prayers, Chapter: Excellence of Glorification; Sahih of Muslim, No: 3694 (31), Book of Dhikr and Supplications, Chapter: he Virtue Of Tahlil (Saying La Ilaha Ill-Allah), Tasbih (Saying Subhan Allah) And (Du'a) Supplication.

[5] Reference to this hadith has already been mentioned see: Page 104.

[6] Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī, No: 2639, Book of Chapters on Faith, Chapter: What has been said about the one who dies while bearing witness that there is no god but Allah.

[7] Musnad of Imam Ahmad, 1:450.

[8] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 4729, Book of Tafsir, Chapter: Those are they that disbelieve in the signs of their Lord and the encounter with Him; their works have failed; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2785 (18), Book of Characteristics of the Hypocrites, Chapter: Description of the Afterlife, Jannah and Hell.

Sūrah al-‘Ādiyāt: 100

Verses 1-11

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

By the snorting chargers (*wa ‘ādiyāt ḍabḥan*). This is an oath. The word ‘*ādiyāt*’ is an adjective qualifying a noun that has been omitted from mention. What is the noun qualified by the term? Is it the horses? ‘By the snorting horses?’ Or it is the camels; ‘by the snorting camels?’ The exegetes have offered two views. Some of them hold that the omitted noun is *ibil*, camels. The whole sentence would thus be: By the snorting camels. The reference is to the camels which run from ‘Arafah to Muzdalifah then to Minā. This is done during the performance of the hajj rituals. The upholders of this view also plead to the fact that this surah is of Makkan origin. There was no jihad during the Makkan period so that the Qur’an would swear by the horses.

The second view is upheld by the majority of the exegetes. This is the sounder view. It is the horses which have been qualified by the adjective ‘*ādiyāt*. The actual sentence would be: By the snorting horses. The snorting horses were a known phenomenon to the Arabs even before the ruling of jihad was issued. During the pre-Islamic period there were horses racing towards the enemies in wars fought for truth or mundane purposes.

Allah says: *wa al-‘ādiyāt (by the snorting horses)*. The word ‘*ādiyāt*’ is plural of *al-‘ādī* which is an *ism fā’il* derived from ‘*adw* (running) which means quick walk and running. The word *ḍabḥan*. *Ḍabḥ* signifies the sound that comes out of the belly of the horse when it gallops. A sound issues from their chests. This sound signifies the power of the horses and extreme speed.

By the strikers of fire (*mūriyāt qadḥan*). The word *mūriyāt* is derived from ‘*ūriya* or *warā* meaning: striking. This implies striking fire when stones are struck against each other as is known in our region of Hijr. When you strike stones against each other it strikes fire. These horses, due to their power and speed, strike their hoofs with the earth. When they hit a stone on the earth it strikes another and it gives out fire. This is due to the power and speed with this it strikes the earth.

By the dawn-raiders. That is, the ones which raid the enemies at the hour of dawn. This is a more effective form of raid; to take on the enemy in the early morning when they are least expecting the onslaught and are asleep. Even if

someone gets up he will be slow and inactive. Allah has sworn by these raiding horses which raid in the morning time. The Prophet [pbuh] would not attack a people during night time. Rather he would wait till morning. If he heard the sound of the Morning Adhan from a settlement he would not attack that and if he did not hear the *adhān* he would raid it.[1]

Blazing a trail of dust (*naq'an*). That is, these horses, in carrying out this raid and due to this gallop, raise dust. *naq'an* refers to the dust that rises due to the speedy gallop of horses. When the horses move fast on the earth their advancement and retreat cause the dust to rise. **Cleaving there with a host (*fa wasatna bi hī jam'an*).**! That is, these horses, engulfed in this dust, enter the ranks of the enemies. The implication is that they don't set a target short than that the center of the enemy ranks. This is what makes the horses beneficial. However, the horses are good in totality. Allah's Messenger says: "There is goodness in the forelocks of horses till the Day of Resurrection." [2] Allah has sworn an oath by these snorting horses--which reach their target and enter the heart of the enemy ranks without fear and untired--upon what has been stated about man in the next verse.

Allah says: **Surely Man is ungrateful (*kanūd*) to his Lord.** This is *themuqsam 'alay hi*, the response of the oath, the fact sworn of. The word man in this sentence is generic in its sense; that is, it refers to the human kind in general. The implication is: When man does not get guidance he proves to be ungrateful, *kanūd*. He does not show gratitude to the blessings of Allah. Allah says: "and man carried it. Surely he is sinful, very foolish." (Q 33:72) Another view is that man, in this context, refers to the disbelieving men. This view holds that a general term has been used to signify a specific entity. The stronger view is that the word is general in implication. It is true of the entire human race that if it were not due to the divine guidance man would be ungrateful to Allah. *Kunūd*, ungratefulness is same as rejection, *kufr*. The implication is: rejecter of and ungrateful to the blessings of Allah. Allah provides man without measure. This abundant provision creates in him transgression. There are men who when they see that they have been granted self sufficiency become transgressors. In many cases opulence makes humans ungrateful to Allah. Such a man negates the blessings of Allah upon him and does not be grateful. Nor does he obey Allah as He is ungrateful to the blessings of Allah.

And surely he is (*wa inna hū*) a witness against that! The pronoun *hū* in "*wa inna hū*" has been taken to refer to Allah. That is, Allah bears witness to that the servant is ungrateful to Allah's blessings.

Another view is that the antecedent of the pronoun is the man himself already mentioned. The meaning would be that man himself bears witness to that he is ungrateful to Allah's blessings.

The sounder view is that the pronoun admits of both the possibilities. Allah is witness to what is buried in the heart of man. He witnesses his deeds. Man too is witness to his inner self. However, he at times admits of this testimony in his life on the earth. At times he does not admit it. On the Day of Judgment he shall witness against himself as Allah says: "on the day when their tongues, their hands and their feet shall testify against them touching that they were doing." (Q 24:24)

Surely he, that is, man, is passionate in his love for good things (*al-khayr*). The word *khayr* refers to wealth as Allah says: "Prescribed for you, when any of you is visited by death, and he leaves behind some goods (*khayr*), is to make testament." (Q 2:180) The word *khayr* in this verse of Surah al-Baqarah means: abundant wealth. Thus the word *khayr* refers to wealth. It is clear that man has great love for wealth. Allah says: "And you love wealth with an ardent love." (Q 89:20) You would not find a man who is free of love for wealth. As for the love for wealth that is true of any human being. No human being is free of this liking for the mundane wealth. However, the ardent love is not found in every human being. Some people love only that much wealth as suffices them and that makes them independent of help from other servants of Allah. Some people love to have more wealth. Some people love to have even more. So on and so forth. The important point is that every man has love for wealth. However, the level of love for wealth differs with different men. Every man differs from the rest in this respect.

At this point Allah reminds man of another situation he must face and says: **"Knows he not (*afalā ya'lamu*) that when that which is in the tombs is over-thrown."** So he should work for that too. He should not concentrate on wealth only. The words: *afalā ya'lamu* imply: Is he not sure of that? **That when that which is in the tombs is over-thrown.** That is, it will be opened up and scattered. The people will come out of their graves to proceed to the Lord of the worlds like scattered locust. They all come out in a single foil. Allah says: "It was only one Cry; then behold, they are all arraigned before Us." (Q 36:53)

And that which is in the breasts is brought out. The reference is to the intentions buried in the hearts. It also covers the actions of the heart like reliance in Allah, yearning for him, fearing him, having hopes in him and other feelings that seat in the hearts. In this verse Allah has said that the foundational matters are found in the hearts. At another place He says: "upon the day when the secrets are tried, and he shall have no strength, no helper."

(Q 86:9-10) In the life of the world Allah commands us to deal with the humans according to their apparent conditions. So much so the hypocrites are treated like the true believers. However, on the Last Day the issues will be settled according to the intentions lying in the hearts. This makes it incumbent upon us to consider the intentions in the hearts before doing something. It is the intention of the heart that counts. It will be the matter upon which one will be judged on the Last Day. This is why Allah says: **And that which is in the breasts is brought out.**

The last two verses are interconnected in that the resurrection of the bodies from the earth relates to the coming out of the bodies from the bellies of the earth and revealing what is in the hearts is to bring out what is buried in the hearts. Thus resurrection is the bringing out of bodies which are hidden in the earth and the revelation of the intentions of the hearts are also dug out. This clearly explains the interrelation between the two verses and the two matters.

Surely on that day their Lord shall be aware of them! That is, Allah Almighty will be aware of the humans. Here the plural pronoun has been used instead of the singular “he”. This is in spite of the fact that man discussed in the earlier verses is singular. But Allah has used the plural pronoun considering the general meaning in the word man which covers all human beings when used as generic term. The words *inna al-insān* originally meant every man. Another important point to note is that in this verse Allah has told that He will know them on the Last Day. Allah always knows the true status of the matters. He has only used this style of expression to allude to that it will be the day of recompense. Otherwise He knows everything now and has had knowledge forever of what happened and what shall happen.

This is a short commentary on this great Surah of the Qur’an. Anyone intending further details should refer to the *tafsīr* works which have dealt it at great length. I confine myself to briefly referring to the meanings of the text. We ask Allah to grant us guidance and the ability to follow it. We beseech Him to make us among those who recite His book the way it should be recited. He has power over everything.

[1] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 610, Book of Adhān (the Call to prayer), Chapter: The Adhan Saves Blood.

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2850, Book of Jihad, Chapter: There is goodness in the forelocks of horses till the Day of Resurrection; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1872 (97), Book of Government, Chapter: Excellence of Horses and that Godo is found in thier Forelocks.

Sūrah al-Qāri‘ah: 101

Verses 1-11

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

The Clatterer (*al-qāri‘ah*)! The word *qāri‘ah* is an active participle (*ism fā‘il*) derived from the verb *qara‘a*. The reference is to the entity that would strike the hearts and frighten them. And this will happen when the trumpet will be sounded. Allah says: “On the day the Trumpet is blown, and terrified is whosoever is in the heavens and earth, excepting whom God wills, and every one shall come to Him, all utterly abject.” (Q 27:85) Thus the sound will first strike the ears and then the hearts. This clatterer is the greatest one which is unparalleled. This is also one of the name of the Last Day just like it other names including *al-Ghāshiyah*, *al-Hāqqah*. The words: “**What is the Clatterer? (*mā al-qāri‘ah*)**” The particle *mā* (literally meaning what/no) is used as a particle of interrogation. This is a rhetorical question and is used to signify the greatness and exaltation of the entity about which the question is put. The meaning would therefore be: What is the *qāri‘ah* which he believes to be impossible?

And what shall teach you what is the Clatterer? This is an added stress on the expression of exaltation and importance of the event. It also works to frighten further. The meaning is: What is that which teaches you about this *qāri‘ah*? This in turn implies that it is a matter of great significance and the very severe one. Then the Almighty explained when it will occur: He says: **The day that men shall be like scattered moths (*al-farāsh al-mabthūth*)**. That is, this *qāri‘ah* will happen when the above mentioned events will unfold. The day the people shall erupt out of their graves like scattered moths. The scholars have said: The people will be like scattered froth (*farāsh mabthūth*). *Farāsh* signifies small insects which gather around fire during the night time. They are very weak and seem to move along directionless. They mix together and usually fall down in the fire unknowing. The people on that day will be like these moths in that they too will be weak, bewildered, and mixed together moving without direction. They will be *mabthūth*, scattered. A similar depiction of the scene in the Qur‘an follows: “They shall come forth from the tombs as if they were scattered grasshoppers.” (Q 54:7)

If you imagine the scene when the people will come out of their graves this way you will conclude that the situation will be very grave and unprecedented. All the people from Adam to the ones upon whom the Last

Day will come shall come out of the graves found in the entire world, east and west, together like a single man at a single moment. Then there will be others who are not buried in the graves like the ones who are drowned in the sea and eaten up by fishes or who fall down in the unsettled part of the earth and are eaten up by the animals or other similar unfortunate folks. All of these shall throng out as a single body at a single instance. They will be thronging in and going about the earth.

And the mountains (*jabāl*) shall be like plucked wool-tufts (*al-‘ihn al-manfūsh*). The word *jabāl* signifies the known mountains which are huge and hard. They shall become like plucked wool-tufts (**and the mountains shall be like plucked wool-tufts.**). *‘ihn* means: wool. It has also been held that it means: cotton. *Al-manfūsh* means: carded. The meaning of the verse therefore is: Having been sound and solidly established in the land these mountains shall become like carded wool or cotton. Regardless of the matter you card the wool with your hand or the proper tool it turns so light that a least blow of the wind takes it away. The Almighty Allah has, in another verse, said that the mountains will like dust scattered. Allah says: “and the mountains crumbled and become a dust scattered.” (Q 56:5-6) In this surah Allah says: “the mountains shall be like plucked wool-tufts.”

Then he whose deeds weigh heavy in the Balance shall inherit a pleasing life, but he whose deeds weigh light in the Balance shall plunge in the womb of the Pit. And what shall teach thee what is the Pit? A blazing Fire! Allah has divided human beings in two kinds:

The First Kind: Those whose deeds weigh heavy. Reference is to the men whose good deeds will outweigh the bad deeds. The second group of people is the one whose good deeds will be outweighed by the bad deeds or who will have no good deeds like the disbelievers. Allah says: “**Then he whose deeds weigh heavy in the Balance shall inherit a pleasing life (*al-‘īshah al-rāḍiyah*).**” The word *‘īshah* is derived from *al-‘aysh*, which means life. They says: The man lived (*‘āsha*) for a long time. He survived a long time. The word *‘īshah* in this sentence, follows the form *fi’lah*. It depicts a state and is not *amaṣdar*, verbal noun. The verbal noun implying the single life would be *‘ayshah*. When we use the form *‘īshah* we use the form *fi’lah* as explained by Ibn Mālik, the author of *al-Fiyah*:

wa fa ‘lah li marratin ka jalsatin

wa fi ‘lah li hay’atin ka jilsatin

The form *fa’lah* is used to describe one instance of doing something and it follows the form *jalsah*. The form *Fi’lah* is used to describe status and form and it follows the form *jilsah*.

The meaning of the expression “*fī ʿīshatin rāḍiyatin*” is that the man shall remain in pure and prosperous life. It has been held that the word *Rāḍiyah* is an *ism al-fāʿil* used to signify *ism mafʿūl*. The meaning would be: life with the person is pleased. Another view is that it is an *ism fāʿil* which is used as a genitive construction. The meaning would therefore be: A life of pleasure. Both the explanations lead to the same meaning. The meaning is: It would be a pleasing life without any petulance, free of trouble, and free of exhaustion. It will be perfect from all aspects. This is the meaning of the life in Jannah. May Allah include us among the fortunate dwellers of Jannah! In this life the dwellers of Jannah will not be touched by exhaustion and tiredness. They will never be made to leave that life. They will have no fear. They will remain in abundant blessings. Their feeling will remain pure and free. Their condition will be the best. So this is the pleasing life.

But he whose deeds weigh light in the Balance. This state is either that of the disbeliever who shall not have any good deed in his account as the good deeds of the disbelievers are recompensed in this worldly life. It does not do him any good in the Hereafter. It may be a Muslim who has wronged himself by committing enough sins as shall outweigh his good deeds. **Shall plunge in the womb (*ummu hū*) of the Pit (*hāwiyah*).** The word *umm* (literally: mother) in this sentence refers to his final destination. That is, his will be the target of *al-hāwiyah*. *Hāwiyah* is one of the names of Hell. The meaning of the sentence is: His final destination will be Fire of Hell. May Allah protect us!

Another view is that the word *umm* in this noble verse means: The skin on the head. In this sense the meaning would be: He shall be put in the fire of Hell with head falling first. We beseech Allah to save us from this evil end! When a verse admits of two meanings which are not contradictory and one has no priority over the other then we are obliged to give both the meanings to the verse. Thus we say: The man shall be put in fire while his head entering it first. At the same time his final destination and refuge shall be the Fire of Hell.

And what shall teach thee what is the Pit? This style of expression has been employed to stress the gravity and immense intensity of the *Hāwiyah*. He asks what is it? Do you know what it is? It is a great thing. It is a **blazing Fire!** It gives the worst possible heat. The Prophet [pbuh] has said: “The (Fire of Hell) has sixty-nine times more power than the fire of this world.”[1] If you study the fire of this world you find it the same in comparison to the fire of hell regardless of the matter it issues from wood, leaves, petrol or any other severe form. The fire of Hell is sixty-nine times stronger than all forms of fire on earth. We seek protection with Allah from this fire! This verse threatens and

frightens us from this day and tells us that all the people will have either of the following two conditions:

Either his good deeds will outweigh his bad deeds or his bad deeds will be more than his good deeds.

This surah also offers basis for the view that there are many scales to be used on the Day of Judgment. In some religious source texts it has been said there would be only one scale. The question arises, if it is only one scale or there would be many?[2]

Some scholars have said: There will be only a single scale. The plural scales have been mentioned at some places in consideration of the things to be weighed. We know that it will weigh the good and the bad deeds. Then it will be the good deeds of this man, that *ummah* and other entities. In this sense it can be termed in plural sense in consideration of the items to be weighed. Otherwise there is only one single scale.

Some of the scholars have held that there are many scales. Each *ummah* shall have a separate scale. Similarly, every different deed shall have different scales to be weighed in. This is why the word *mīzān* has also been used in the plural form (*mawāzīn*).

The more dominant view, Allah knows best, is that it is only a single *mīzān*. It has been used in plural form in consideration of the weighed items and deeds or the different nations or different individuals whose deeds shall be weighed.

This verse is silent on the status of the person whose good and bad deeds are equal. However, Allah has explained his status in Surah al-A'rāf (Q 7). We have been told that such men will not be put in Hell rather they will be assigned a place called A'rāf. In that surah Allah has described what will happen between them and the dwellers of Jannah. We are told that when they will turn to the people of Hell they will say: O Lord don't make us among the transgressors. We ask Allah to make us among those whose good deeds outweigh their bad deeds, to forgive us and treat us kindly. He has power to do everything.

[1] Reference to this tradition has already passed. See: page 165.

[2] See Collection of Fatāwā and Epistles by Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah 2:43, particularly the fatwa no:168 on faith.

Sūrah al-Takāthur: 102

Verses 1-8

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Gross rivalry (*takāthur*) diverts you (*alhākum*), even till you visit the tombs. This is a declarative sentence (*jumlah khabariyyah*). Allah Almighty addresses the people telling them news. He says: Gross rivalry (*takāthur*) diverts you. The verbal phrase *alhā kum* means: It has engaged you, diverting your attention till you forgot what is more important than these engagements. These important matters include remembering Allah and obeying Him. This sentence addresses all the members of this ummah. However, some could be excluded from the addressees who are more given to the matters of the afterlife than they are to the worldly matters. Such people are very little. Our view that they are very little is corroborated by a hadith appearing in the two Sahihs that the Almighty shall say on the Last Day: 'O Adam! Adam will reply, 'Labbaik and Sa'daik (I respond to Your Calls, I am obedient to Your orders), wal Khair fi Yadaik (and all the good is in Your Hands)! Then Allah will say (to Adam), Bring out the people of the Fire.' Adam will say, 'What (how many) are the people of the Fire?' Allah will say, 'Out of every thousand (take out) nine hundred and ninety-nine (persons).' [1]

So one out of a thousand shall be in Jannah and the rest go in Hell Fire. This is a frightening number if, from among, the entire human race only one out of a thousand shall enter Jannah and the rest nine hundred and ninety nine shall go to Hell. Therefore, the address in this verse is general. The exception is very insignificant. One out of a thousand is nothing. As for the word *takāthur*, it includes yearn to outmatch others in wealth, tribe, power, status, knowledge and everything in which humans compete each other and boast of their own achievement. To this meaning the following saying of the owner of the garden, recounted in the Qur'an to his fellow, alludes: "I have more abundance of wealth than you and am mightier in respect of men." (Q 18:34) Man at times likes to outmatch others in acquiring wealth. He likes to have more wealth than the others or a greater trade. Some men try to show that their tribe is bigger. He says: We are more in numbers than they. A poet says:

O ('Alqamah) you are not stronger than them, *akthar min hum hiṣan* (that is, Banū 'āmir, in number and supporters). The domination is determined by majority.

The words “*akthar min hum ḥiṣan*” have been said because they Arabs would count the tribal strength with pebbles. If for example this tribe counted to ten thousand men and the other eight then the former would be in majority. This is why the poet says:

O (‘Alqamah) you are not stronger than them, *akthar min hum ḥiṣan* (that is, Banū ‘āmir, in number and supporters). The domination is determined by majority.

Similarly, men try to assert that they outmatch another in knowledge. You will see that one boasts to have more knowledge than another. However, if he is a scholar in the Sharī‘ah then he is better. If however one boasts of having more knowledge of the mundane sciences that is either allowable or *ḥarām*. This is the majority cases in which people compete with others. They try to outmatch each other in these issues while they have been created to worship Allah.

Allah’s words: **even till you visit the tombs**. That is, this contest among you continues till you reach the graves, that is, till you die. Thus man, by nature, engages in this *takāthur* till his death. Rather at times a man grows in hope in this world along with his growth in age. Thus he grows old in age and hopes. For example there is a man of ninety years. You will still find him having ambitions to the point which are not found in a young man of fifteen years. This is the meaning of the noble verse; that is, you remain engaged in outmatching each other and forget the afterlife. This continues till your death.

It has also been held that the words “**even till you visit the tombs.**” mean: Till you count your deaths the way you try to prove your majority in the living members of your tribe. A man comes and says: “My tribe is greater than yours. If you want proof go to the graveyard. Count the graves of our men and then count the graves of your men. Whose graves outnumber the other party?” However, this view is very weak and the context of the verse does not admit of it. The first meaning is the sound one; you continue contesting till your death approaches you.

‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-Azīz, may Allah bless him, concluded from the divine words “**even till you visit the tombs**” his view that a person visiting the graves must return to his home town. The grave yards are not the places to settle in. It has also been reported that a Bedouin heard a Qur’an reader recite: **even till you visit the tombs**. The Bedouin said: “By Allah a visitor is not a settler. By Allah we shall be raised to life.” This is true. By this we learn that what some people mention in journals etc is absolutely wrong as they say about a deceased. They say: “He has shifted to his permanent abode.” This is falsehood and baseless

statement. The graves are not the final destination. If a man believes what is said in the above statement he would be a rejecter and disbeliever in the resurrection on the Last Day. Rejection of the resurrection means apostasy from Islam. However, many people take such wordings without considering what they mean. This is why it is necessary to avoid such statements. One should not say that the grave is the final destination. The final destination is either Jannah or Hell on the Last Day.[2]

Allah says: **No indeed (*kalīlā*); but soon you shall know. Again (*thumma*), no indeed (*kallā*); but soon you shall know.** It has been held that the word *kallā* in this context implies rebuke. It means: Avoid this *takāthur*. It has also been held that means: truly, indeed, in reality. The words “**soon you shall know**” mean: You shall soon learn the consequences of your behaviour when you shall enter the afterlife. You will learn that this *takāthur* will not help you. It has been said in a sound *hadith* recorded by Imam Muslim in his *Sahih* that “Son of Adam says, “My wealth, my wealth.” That is, he takes pride in it. “And you have no wealth except that you ate and destroyed or wore and made it wear out or gave in charity and gave it life.””[3] The rest is the wealth that will go to others. This is the truth. All the wealth that we have faces the following fates. Either we use it in food and thus eat it up. Or we wear it and make it worn out. Or we give it away in charity and send it ahead for us. This we will find on the Last Day. Another case is that we die leaving it behind to be inherited by others. All the wealth we have is spend in any of these four ways.

No indeed (*kalīlā*); but soon you shall know. That is, soon you shall learn the consequences of this *takāthur* which has made you forget the Afterlife. **Again (*thumma*), no indeed (*kallā*); but soon you shall know.** The same sentence has been repeated in order to further stress the rebuke. Then Allah says: **No indeed; did you know with the knowledge of certainty.** That is, had you known the fact, you would learn that are you misguided. However, you don’t know for sure as you have fallen in waywardness and a great error. Then Allah says: **you shall surely see Hell; Again, you shall surely see it with the eye of certainty.** “**You shall surely see**” is a new independent sentence. It does not correspond to the conditional “if”. This makes it incumbent upon the reader to stop at “**No indeed; did you know with the knowledge of certainty.**” We have heard a great number of prayer leaders and Qur’an readers reading both the sentences together and saying: “No indeed; did you know with the knowledge of certainty, you shall surely see Hell.” Reading this in that way is either due to ignorance on their part or forgetfulness. It can also be due to the fact that they do not properly and fully ponder over the text.

Had they fully pondered over it, they would have learnt that this joint reading spoils the meanings. To say “No indeed; did you know with the knowledge of

certainty, you shall surely see Hell” means: That they will see Hell if they have knowledge. This is not sound. This is why we should remain cautious and conscious in this regards. Anyone who hears another reciting the verse as “No indeed; did you know with the knowledge of certainty, you shall surely see Hell” he should interrupt and say: O my brother, this joint reading spoils the meaning. Don’t read both the sentences together. Give a break in between them. This stop and break is required due to two things: It is the end of the verse. The Sharī‘ah has sanctioned stopping at the head of the verses. Secondly reading the two parts together spoils the meanings “No indeed; did you know with the knowledge of certainty, you shall surely see Hell.” Thus the sentence **“you shall surely see Hell”** is a new sentence. It is not related to the previous sentence. It is a sentence employing oath in it. This oath is implied and is not put expressly. The actual sentence (after making the oath explicit) would be as follows: “By Allah you shall surely see Hell.”

This is why the scholars of Arabic grammar and declensions have explained this sentence as follows: The particle L (lām, in *tarawunna*) gives the sense of oath. The sentence *tarawunna* is the response to the oath. The oath is omitted from mention. The actual sentence would be: “By Allah you shall surely see Hell (*al-jahīm*).” *al-jahīm* is one of the names of Hell.

The words: **“Again, you shall surely see it with the eye of certainty.”** This stresses the fact that you shall see Hell. However, when you shall see it? You will be made to see it on the Last Day. This fire will be brought forward dragged by seventy thousand bridles; every bridle is pulled by seventy thousand angels. What is your estimate of this fire! With Allah we seek refuge! It is a huge fire as it has seventy thousand ropes and every rope is being pulled by seventy thousand angels. May Allah save us from it! **You shall be questioned that day concerning true bliss.** That is, at that time and place you shall be asked about the blessings. The scholars have differed among themselves about the addressee in the statement “you shall be questioned that day concerning true bliss.” Does it refer to the disbelievers or both the believers and the disbelievers?

The sound view is that both the believer and the disbeliever shall be questioned concerning the blessings. The disbeliever shall be questioned by way of rebuke and censure. The believer shall be reminded of the blessings through the question. The argument for the fact that this statement is general and covers both the believers and the disbelievers is found in the story that happened among the Prophet [pbuh], Abū Bakr [rta] and ‘Umar [rta]. It has been reported that Abū Hurayrah [rta] said: Allah's Messenger went out (of his house) one day or one night, and there he found Abu Bakr and 'Umar also. He said: What has brought you out of your houses at this hour? They said:

Allah's Messenger, it is hunger. Thereupon he said: By Him in Whose Hand is my life, what has brought you out has brought me out too; get up. They got up along with him and (all of them) came to the house of an Ansari, but he was not at home. When his wife saw him she said: Most welcome, and Allah's Messenger (may peace be Upon him) said to her: Where is so and so? She said: He has gone to get some fresh water for us. When the Ansari came and he saw Allah's Messenger and his two Companions, he said: Praise be to Allah, no one has more honourable guests today than I (have). He then went out and brought them a bunch of ripe dates, dry dates and fresh dates, and said: Eat some of them. He then took hold of his long knife (for slaughtering a goat or a sheep). Allah's Messenger said to him: Beware of killing a milch animal. He slaughtered a sheep for them and after they had eaten of it and of the bunch and drank, and when they had taken their fill and had been fully satisfied with the drink, Allah's Messenger said to Abu Bakr and Umar: By Him in Whose Hand is my life, you will certainly be questioned about this bounty on the Day of judgment. Hunger brought you out of your house, then you did not return until this bounty came to you.[4] According to another version he said: "By the One in Whose Hand is my soul! This is among the favors which you shall be asked about on the Day of Judgment. Cool shade, tasty ripe dates, and cool water." [5]

This proves that the believers as well disbelievers shall be questioned about the blessings. However, the nature of the question will be different. The believer shall be questioned in order to remind him of the blessings and it will give him pleasure. He shall know that Allah blessed him in the life of the world and He will bless him in the afterlife as well. The way he was honoured by Allah through His blessings in the life of the world he shall be honoured by Him against through grant of abundant blessings. As for the disbeliever he shall be questioned in order to rebuke him and make him regret. We ask Allah to put us in His obedience and make our sustenance only that is helpful in obeying Him. Indeed He has power over everything.

[1] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 6530, Chapter Making the Hearts Tender, Chapter: "Surely the earthquake of the Hour is a mighty thing"; Sahih of Muslim, No: 222 (379), Book of Faith, Chapter: Allahs saying to Adam [pbuh]: Take out a group of people of Fire.

[2] See collection of *Fatāwā* and *Rasā'il* of the Shaykh Ibn Taymiyyah, 3:133, *fatwā* no: 502.

[3] Sahih of Muslim, No: 2958 (3), Book of Zuhd, Chapter: The world is a prison-house for a believer and Paradise for a non-believer.

[4] Sahih of Muslim, No: 2038 (140), Book of Drinks, Chapter: It is permissible to take someone else to the house of one who you are certain will approve of that and will not mind. It is recommended to gather to eat.

[5] *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, No: 2369, Book of Zuhd, Chapter: What Has Been Related About The Subsistence Of The Companions Of The Prophet [pbuh].

Sūrah al-‘Aṣr: 103

Verses 1-3

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Allah Almighty says: **By the afternoon (wal ‘aṣr)! Surely Man is in the way of loss.** Allah has sworn by *al-‘Aṣr*. As for the term *al-‘aṣr*, it has been held that it signifies the last part of the day. The last part of the day is the best part of it. The Aṣr prayer is called the middle and the most excellent prayer as Allah’s Messenger has called it so.[1]

Another view is that ‘aṣr, in this verse, refers to time in general. This is the sounder of the two views. Allah has sworn an oath by ‘aṣr because it is time in which the situations change, matters are upturned, the fates of people take their turns as is observable in what we experience and know and hear from the other people what is absent from us. So ‘aṣr is time which the creatures live. Its changes from hard to pleasant, wartime to peace, health to disease, good deeds to bad deeds and other aspects of changes known to all. Allah has sworn by time to affirm that **“Surely Man is in the way of loss.”** Man, in this sentence, is used to depict genre, the entire human beings. Thus is it general. We can learn that the word man in a certain context is used in general generic sense by asking if it is possible to say *kull*, (every, all) before it. If it were stated: “Every man is in loss,” that would truly depict the meaning of this sentence.

In this verse, Allah has sworn by time and said that man’s status is characterized by loss. He is in loss in all of his statuses, in the life of the world and the hereafter except for those whom Allah has exempted from this general statement. This sentence has been stressed by the help of three factors: a) the oath, b) the particle *inna* (indeed) and c) the particle *L*. The word *fī khusr* (in loss) have been used instead of saying: man is a loser (is *khāsir*) to create more effect. This added stress and effect is obtained in this form of the sentence because the particle *fī* (in) is used as adverb of place. It is as if to say: man is covered in loss. The loss is surrounding him from all sides. **“Save those who believe, and do righteous deeds, and counsel each other unto the truth, and counsel each other to be steadfast.”** The Almighty has mentioned that the people characterized by these four qualities are exceptions:

The first quality: belief, pure of all sorts of doubt and hesitation, in things which Allah's Messenger has explained in response to the question about *īmān* by Jibrīl [pbuh]: The Prophet [pbuh] had said: “ (Īmān) is that you believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, Messengers, the Last Day and that you believe in the divine decree and predestination; good and evil.”[2]

An explication of this *ḥadīth* requires lengthy discussion and we have explained it at different occasions.[3] So those who believe in these seven things are called the believers, the faithful. However, it is necessary that the belief is free of any doubts and hesitations. You believe in these things as if you see them with your very eyes. People are divided in three types with regards to this issue:

The First Kind: a believer with pure faith, a faith which is not tinted with any sort of doubt.

The Second Kind: A rejecter and *kāfir*.

The Third Kind: A person uncertain and indecisive. The first of these three categories of men is the one who attains salvation. Such a man has faith untinted by hesitation and doubt. He believes in Allah's existence, His Lordship, and His divinity. He believes in His names and attributes. He believes in the angels which is an unseen creature. Allah created them out of light. He assigned them duties some of which we know and some we don't. Jibrīl [pbuh], we know, is assigned the duty to communicate the revelation of Allah to His Messengers. Mikā'īl is assigned the duty to take care of plantation and rain. Allah has assigned him the task to oversee the issues related to rain and the plantation. Iṣrāfīl is assigned the duty to blow the trumpet. Mālik is the angel in charge of Hell fire. Riḍwān is in charge of the jannah. There are angles whose names we don't know. Nor do we know their duties. However, a *ḥadīth* of the Prophet [pbuh] tells us that “There is no spot, the size of four fingers in them, except that there is an angel standing before Allah, bowing before Him or prostrating to Him.”[4]

Similarly, we believe in the Books Allah has revealed to His Messengers. We believe in the Messengers Allah has mentioned in His Book. We believe in them specifically and we also have a general faith in the Prophets Allah has not mentioned. Allah has not mentioned all the names of the Messengers. He says: “of some We have related to you, and some We have not related to you.” (Q 40:78) The Last Day is the day when the people will be resurrected from their graves for accountability. Some will be barefooted, not wearing anything in their feet, some will be without clothing, some un-circumcised, and some without any wealth. They will be raised to life that way.

When the Prophet [pbuh] told that the people will be resurrected naked, ‘Ā’ishah [rta] asked: “Will men and women be looking at each other (in that condition)?” The Prophet [pbuh] said: “The matter will be graver (than one could look at others).” He means to say that the situation will be more serious than one could engage in such sights. Everyone will be engrossed in his own state. The Shaykh al-Islam said:

Belief in the Day of Judgment includes that one believes in everything, the Prophet [pbuh] informed regarding what will happen after death. Thus it is obligatory to believe in the trial of the grave, that is, the questioning of the deceased after he is buried and the people turn back leaving him there. Two angels come to him and ask him about his Lord, religion, and prophet. We also need to believe in that the grave is either a garden of the gardens of jannah or a ditch from the ditches of Hell. We will have reward and punishment in the grave as well. Similarly, we need to believe in the existence of Jannah and Hell and everything that is related to the afterlife. All is included in the brief statement: “That you believe in Allah and the Last Day.”

Qadr means: Allah’s decree and predestination. We are obliged to believe in that Allah has power over everything. Allah created pen and said to it: Write. It asked: What may I write? He said: Write everything that is going to happen till the last day.[5] Thus the word belief/believe in the saying “**Save those who believe**” comprises of the six foundational beliefs explained by the Prophet [pbuh].

The second quality is found in Allah’s saying: “**and do righteous deeds.**” It means: They practice the righteous deeds including *ṣalāh*, *zakāh*, fasting, Hajj, good treatment of parents, joining the ties with blood relations, and other good works. Thus these people did not remain confined to belief in the heart rather put that in practice and this resulted in good deeds. Righteous deeds are the ones which have two defining qualities:

First, sincerely done exclusively for Allah Almighty.

Second, done in obedience to the Prophet [pbuh].

If an action is not done in sincerity to Allah it is rejected. In one ḥadīth Qurdsī, narrated by the Prophet [pbuh], Allah says: “I am the One, One Who does not stand in need of a partner. If anyone does anything in which he associates anyone else with Me, I shall abandon him with one whom he associates with Allah.”[6] Therefore, if you stand up in prayer in order to be seen by people or you do charity in order to be seen or you learn knowledge in order to show

off, or you treat your relations good for ostentation or do any other good deed for showing off, it will be rejected even by nature the deed is good.

Similarly, it is important that the deed is done in obedience of the Prophet [pbuh]. If you do a deed that the Prophet [pbuh] did not do while you seek nearness to Allah with all sincerity even then it will not be accepted by Allah as the Prophet [pbuh] has said: “He who did any act for which there is no sanction from our behalf, that is to be rejected.”[7] Therefore, a righteous deed must combine two qualities: First, sincerity to Allah, and second, obedience to Allah’s Messenger [pbuh].

The third quality: “and counsel each other unto the truth (*al-ḥaq*).” That is, some of them counsel and advise others to the truth (*al-ḥaq*). *Al-Ḥaq* is the *Sharī‘ah*. The implication would be as follows: If one of them sees that another person fails to carry out a religious obligation, he should approach him and say: O brother, make sure to fulfil the obligation. When one sees his brother committing a prohibited act he should come forward and tell him: O my brother, avoid the prohibitions. Thus the believers don’t confine themselves to correcting and benefiting themselves but they also benefit others.

The fourth quality: And counsel each other to be steadfast (*ṣabr*). That is, they advise each other to be steadfast and show patience (*ṣabr*). The term “*ṣabr*” means: to stop yourself from doing something that is not proper to do. The scholars have divided *ṣabr* in three categories:

First: *ṣabr* in obedience to Allah.

Second, *ṣabr* avoiding prohibitions of Allah.

Third, *ṣabr* against the divine decrees and decisions about our life.

Ṣabr in obedience to Allah. Many people are lethargic and find it hard to offer prayer in congregation. One does not go to the mosque and says: I offer prayer in my home. I have fulfilled the obligation. Thus he becomes lazy. He should be told: O brother, force your self. Discipline it and make your self offer your prayer in congregation. Many a people become stingy and hesitate to pay the *zakāh* of their wealth if it is huge. Should I give this much wealth away or I should not, he thinks. Such a man should be told: O brother, force your self to pay *zakāh*. The same goes with the rest of the worship rituals. Allah says: for grievous it is, save to the humble. (Q 2:45) You find that majority of the servants of Allah find the worships hard. But they counsel and advise each other to force the self to offer the worships.

Similar, is the status of forcing the self stay away from sins. Some people are dragged by their carnal self to earn money through ignoble and *ḥarām* means

including for example interest, adulteration, fraud, or other sinful ways and methods. We should tell such a man: Brother, make your self observe patience and not earn and work through *ḥarām* means. Some people are subject to a desire to look searchingly at women. When such a man is passing through market, his gazes will follow every woman passing by him. Such a person should be advised to force his self from committing this evil.

The successful men also advise each other to patiently bear the hardships destined by Allah concerning the diseases one suffers, loss in wealth, or loss of his loved ones. If one loses patience and is burdened by pain and suffering the other believers counsel him to bear that. They remind him that it is a matter written by Allah. Impatience and wailing does not help. To remain aggrieved all the time does not remove the grief. For example there is man who has been put to trial by Allah by giving his son death. We tell him: Be patient brother. Imagine that this son was not born to you. The Prophet [pbuh] condoled one of his daughters and said to her: “Whatever Allah takes is for Him and whatever He gives, is for Him, and everything with Him has a limited fixed term (in this world) and so she should be patient and hope for Allah's reward.”[8] All the matters are in the hands of Allah and everything belongs to Him. If He takes back something He gave that is His ownership; there is no point in being angry to your Lord. How do you show such an anger?

If someone asks: Which kind of *ṣabr* is the hardest upon a human being?

Our response to this question is this: There is not a universal principle. The matter differs with different men. Some people find it hard to follow the commands of Allah and it is extremely difficult for them to obey a certain ruling. Some people, on the contrary, find following the commands of Allah easy but find avoiding the sinfulness hard, really difficult. Some people find it easy to force themselves to obey Allah and avoid sinfulness. However, they can't bear easily the hardships. Some even are so weak that they reach to the point when they are about to apostatise. May Allah save us from such a situation! Allah says: “And among men there is such a one as serves God upon the very edge -- if good befalls him he is at rest in it, but if a trial befalls him he turns completely over; he loses this world and the world to come; that is indeed the manifest loss.” (Q 22:11)

Thus we learn that Allah has stressed that all humans are in loss with the exception of those mentioned. Allah has stressed this statement with the use of an oath, the particle ‘indeed’ and the particle *L*. He says that loss is covering them from all sides. There are however men of four qualities which are exceptions and are successful. The people who have faith, do righteous deeds,

and remain counselling each other to follow the truth and to be patient are exceptions.

Imam al-Shāfi‘ī, may Allah shower His mercy upon him, said: “Had Allah not revealed any conclusive argument to the cut the excuse of men than this only surah that would suffice them as a warning.” He means to say that it would suffice them as a reminder, counsel, encouragement upon holding fast to faith, good deeds, calling to Allah, and being steadfast on these virtues. He does not mean to say that this surah suffices as guidance to all the human beings with regards to the entire Sharī‘ah. Rather he means to say that it suffices them as a reminder and principle advice. When a man endowed with reason knows that he is in loss unless he embellishes himself with these four qualities he would try to his best to acquire these traits. He will thus free himself from loss. We beseech Allah to count us among those who reap benefit and are given the ability to follow this teaching. Indeed, He has power over everything.

[1] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 2931, Book of Jihad, Chapter: To invoke Allah to defeat and shake Al-Mushrikun; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 628 (206), Book of Mosques, Chapter: The evidence for those who say that “the middle prayer” is the `Asr prayer.

[2] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 50, Book of Faith, Chapter: Question of Jibrīl; Sahih of Muslim, No: 1, Book of Faith, Chapter: Explicatio of Islam and Īmān.

[3] For explication of this hadith see Collectino of Fatāwā by the Shaikh 3:144.

[4] Jāmi ‘ al-Tirmidhī, No: 2312, Book of Zuhd, Chapter: What Has Been Related About The Prophet (s.a.w) Saying: "If You Knew What I Know.

[5] Reference to this ḥadīth has already passed. See page 32.

[6] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2985 (46), Book of Zuhd, Chapter: Prohibition of Showing off.

[7] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1718 (18), Book of Judicial Decisions, Chapter: Rejection of wrong rulings and of newly-invented matters.

[8] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 1284, Book of Funerals, Chapter: The deceased is punished because of the weeping of his relatives; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 923 (11), Book of Funerals, Chapter: Weeping over the dead.

Sūrah al-Ḥumazah: 104

Verses 1-9

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Woe unto every backbiter (*humazah*). Allah Almighty inaugurated this *sūrah* by the word *wayl*, woe. This is a word expressive of threat. It is used to warn the person who is characterised as “backbiter,” “slanderer” and other traits mentioned. It has also been held that the word *wayl* is a noun for a valley in Hell. However, the first view is the sounder. **“Every backbiter (*humazah*), slanderer (*lumazah*).”** The word *kull* is one of the expressions that signify generality. *Humazah* and *lumazah* are the adjectives describing the same entity. Do these both signify the same meaning or they differ in meaning?

Some scholars have held: These two words give the same meaning. *Humazah* is the same as *lumazah*. Some other scholars hold that each of these gives distinct meaning. One does not mean what the other means.

I like to point out the principle to be followed in *tafsir* and other discussions is that if the dispute is between the position that the two words used together give the same meaning and the position that such words give distinct meaning then we have to take the second position. Every word has distinct meaning. If we hold that both the words occurring together give the same meaning it would mean that there is a useless repetition in the text. Contrarily, if we give both the words different distinct meaning that would mean that there is a difference in the signification of the two words. The sound view about the words *humazah* and *lumazah* in this verse is that there is a difference in the two words: Thus *hamz* is done with action and the *lamz* is carried out verbally. Allah says: “Some of them find fault with you (*yalmizuka*) touching the freewill offerings; if they are given a share of them they are well-pleased, but if they are given none then they are angry.” (Q 9:58)

Thus *hamz* is done with action. A person makes mockery of another by express action for example by twisting his face, making his face, pointing to another inviting him to look at the subject or other ways to point to a fault in the subject. *Hamz* is thus done with action. *Lamz* is done with express statement. Some people, may Allah save us, engaged in finding faults with other either by their action (*hammāz*) or by statement (*lammāz*). The following saying of Almighty Allah points to this. And obey not every mean swearer, backbiter (*hammāz*), going about with slander (*mashshā' bi namīm*). (Q 68:10-1)

Who has gathered riches and counted them over ('addada hū). This is also one of his evil characteristics. He is a person engaged in hoarding wealth, not ready to give it to anyone, and forbidding giving away. Thus he is a stingy man. He does not give anything to anyone. He keeps hoarding wealth and counting it. The word 'addadah, it has been said, means: counting. That is, he keeps engaged in this activity. He goes to his locker time and again and counts it. He counts his dollars in the morning and in the evening though he knows that none has taken anything out of it during the day nor has anything been added to it. However, it is due to his intense love for the wealth that he keeps coming back to it and counting it. This is why such a verb has been used that expressive intensiveness (*mubālaghah*) in action denoted. The implication is his counting practice is such intense and frequent that matches his love and attraction for his riches. He fears that it might have been decreased or hopes it might have increased. He comes to it again and again and counts so that he can be satisfied. Thus he is always engaged in this useless activity.

It has also been said that the verb 'addada means: He makes this wealth his 'uddah, source, tool. The implication is that he gathers it for hard times. Even if this meaning can possibly be given to this word yet it is very farfetched in this context. The reason is that to keep wealth for the hardships while paying the obligatory zakah on it is not condemnable. What is condemnable is to make the wealth one's highest goal. For mere love of the money one keeps coming to it and counting seeing if it has increased or decreased. Thus giving the words 'addada hu the meaning that the person keeps it for future use is weak.

Thinking his riches have made him immortal! That is, this man believes that his wealth will make him immortal and help him remain forever, either physically or in memories. The reason is that the real life span of a man is not that he lives on this earth. Rather the real is the one which he shall live after his death in the hearts and memories of humans. Thus we say that in the verse "**Thinking his riches have made him immortal**" Allah says: he thinks that the wealth shall keep his mention or give him long life. The reality is not that what he thinks. If the people of wealth are not known for spending they don't live beyond their life. The only mention of them after they are died is in negative sense. People say: Such and such person was a stingy man. He kept his wealth from giving in such and such occasion from such and such man. People will mention him but in derogative sense and finding fault with him.

This is why Allah Almighty has said: **No indeed (kallā); he shall be thrust into the Crusher (ḥuṭamah).** The scholars have called the *kallā* in this verse as a particle of rebuke. That is you reproach this person who thinks so and counts

his wealth for doing so. It is also possible that the word *kallā* in the verse implies “indeed.” The meaning would be: **indeed (*kallā*); he shall be thrust into the Crusher**. Both the meanings are sound. This man will not be given eternal life by his wealth. Nor will his name live behind. He will be forgotten and his mention will be erased from memories. If he is remembered that is in bad sense as he has not fulfilled the obligations concerning spending the wealth.

He shall be thrust (*la yunbadhanna*) into the Crusher (*ḥuṭamah*). The particle *La* prefixing the verb *yunbadhanna* has been used to work as *jawāb al-qasm* (complement of the oath). The oath (of which it is a complement) has been omitted from mention. After discovery of the omitted part the sentence would go as follows: *wallāhi la yunbadhanna fī ḥuṭamah*, By God, he will be thrust into the Crusher. Since we hold that there is an oath omitted from mention of which the complement has been brought we can say that the sentence has been stressed by the use of three elements: *Lām*, the *Nūn Ta’kīd*, and the oath. This type of address stress has been frequently used in the Qur’an. A fact is stressed through these three tools: *Lām*, the *Nūn Ta’kīd*, and the oath. Allah swears and oath to affirm something in order to exalt and stress its importance.

The words *la yunbadhanna* (shall be thrust). What shall be crushed? The man who owns the wealth, or the wealth? Both these shall be crushed. As for the wealthy person he shall be crushed as Allah Almighty says in another verse: “The day when they shall be pitched into the fire of Gehenna.” (Q 52:13) That is, they shall be thrust into it. In the verse presently under discussion Allah says: *yunbadhu*, that is, he shall be thrust into the Crusher (*ḥuṭamah*). *ḥuṭamah* is something which crushes. It breaks it into pieces. What is this Crusher? Allah says: **And what shall teach thee what is the Crusher**. This use of rhetorical question stresses and highlights the issue at hand. **The Fire of God kindled (*mūkadah*)**. This is the response to the question. The Crusher is the Fire of Allah kindled. Allah has attributed the fire to Himself. This is because it is He who will punish those who deserve punishment. This punishment is just and it is not oppression. Thus it is the fire with which Allah shall burn those who deserve to be subjected to this punishment. Therefore, it is a just fire and burning and not unjust and oppressive. This qualification is necessary because burning in fire is in certain cases oppressive. In some cases it is just. There is no doubt in that punishing the disbelievers in fire is absolute justice. Allah Almighty is praised on this justice as He punishes those rejecters the way they deserve.

Ponder how form of the word *ḥuṭamah* corresponds to the descriptions of the person who shall enter it: *humazah* and *lumazah*. Thus *ḥuṭamah* rhymes with *humazah* and *lumazah* not only in retribution but also in form.

The Fire of God kindled (*mūkadah*). That is, the fire kindled, lit and set to flames. **Roaring over the hearts (*afidah*).** *Afidah* is plural of *fu'ād* which signifies heart. The meaning is: The fire reaches up to and covers the hearts. May Allah protect us from it! This is due to its extreme heat. It will reach the hearts even though they are covered in the chest and separated by skin and other layers. In spite of all this protective layers the heat shall reach hearts. **Upon them (*inna hā 'alayhim*).** That is, the *ḥuṭamah*, the fire of Allah kindled, shall cover upon the backbiters and the slanderers who collect wealth and stop others from doing good. So far the person has been referred to as third personal singular. However, in this sentence the third person plural pronoun has been used. This has been done in consideration of the meaning and implication of the previously mentioned third person singular. The reason is that the words “*kulli humazah lumazah* (every backbiter, slanderer)” is general in its implication and covers all the backbiters and slanderer.

Al-Mūṣadah means: covered down. The doors to it are covered. So they must not hope for an escape from it. May Allah protect us! Allah says: “As often as they desire to come forth from it, they shall be restored into it.” (Q 32:20) That is, they shall be raised to its doors so that they can hope to get out of it. However, immediately afterwards they shall be pushed back and thrust into it again. All these are ways to make the punishment harder and harder. This adds to the punishment because when a man has a hope to get out of the punishment and that he shall soon escape it he feels a sense of relief. But when after this feeling he is made to go back to the punishment his pain grows a new. This is how the dwellers of Hell shall be punished emotionally and physically. The punishment of the dwellers of Hell has been mentioned in the Qur'an and the Hadith.

Imagine there is a man in a room or in a car which catches fire. There is no chance to escape. The doors are closed. What will happen to him? He shall remained engulfed in disappointment and misery; a hopelessness that can't be compared by any other form. They shall, may Allah save us, remain this way in Fire. The fire shall be covered upon them. **In columns outstretched (*fī 'amadin mumaddah*).** This fire shall cover them and it shall have outstretched columns covering them from all sides so that none shall have the power to get an opening and escape from it.

Allah Almighty has not narrated that to us and explained this fact in this *sūrah* in order that we should recite it with our tongues. Nor is it His purpose that we understand its meanings alone. Rather the intention is that we should avoid and fear the consequences of these evil morals: finding fault in men with our statements, doing the same with our actions, developing

greed for wealth to the point that one seems to be created for that purpose alone--so that he lives for the wealth or the wealth lives for him forever. We learn that the person whose status matches this description deserves to be punished in Fire that has been described by Allah. He describes it as *al-hutamah*, Crusher, which rises up to one's hearts and covers one upon himself and contains columns outstretched. We beseech Allah to save us from this fire. May He give us the ability and capability to be sincere in our sayings, actions and be steadfast in following His religion!

Sūrah al-Fīl: 105

Verses 1-5

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Have you not seen how your Lord did with the Men of the Elephant? In this noble verse Allah Almighty addresses the Prophet [pbuh] or anyone who can validly be an addressee of this text. In the former sense the immediate and direct addressee is the Prophet [pbuh]. The ummah, being the follower of the Prophet [pbuh], is also an addressee through him at a secondary level. According to the second interpretation the address is general and to everyone from among his ummah in immediate manner. Allah Almighty affirms what He did to the people of the elephant. People of the Elephant are the people of Yemen who had come to destroy Ka'bah. They had with them a huge Elephant which was sent to them by the king of Abyssinia. This campaign was undertaken by them because the King of Yemen intended to stop people from pilgrimage to Ka'bah, the House of Allah. He erected a house in his land resembling the Ka'bah and called the people to visit it in order to make them abandon pilgrimage to Ka'bah. This angered the people of Arabia. An Arab went to this house, built by the King of Yemen as an alternative for Ka'bah, and defecated there. He spoiled the walls of the house with the filth. This infuriated the king of Yemen. He informed the king of Abyssinia of the matter who sent to them this huge elephant.

It has also been said that he had sent six elephants to help transport this huge elephant. The king of Yemen came forward with his armies intending to fell down the Ka'bah. However, Allah Almighty protected His House. When the enemy armies reached the place called al-Mughammas, the elephant stopped and jibbed. It refused to proceed in the direction of Ka'bah. The jockey rebuked it. Yet it refused. When they turned its direction to Yemen it would start running to that direction. But when they turned its face to Ka'bah it would stop.[1] This is one the signs of Allah Almighty. The enemy remained there only till the time Allah sent birds to them which pelted them with stones of clay.

Did He not make their guile to go astray? And He loosed upon them birds in flights (*ṭayran abābīl*), hurling against them stones of baked clay (*Min Sijjīl*). The words: *ṭayran abābīl*. The scholars have said that this means different flocks of bird. Every bird had in its beak a solid stone. *Min Sijjīl*. *Sijjīl* means:

baked clay. It is very solid. The stone the birds carried were not huge. Rather they were small pebbles. A stone would be pelted on the head of one of the enemy soldiers and it would pierce its body and come out from his bottom. May Allah protect us from such chastisement!

And He made them like green blades (*‘aṣṣfin*) devoured (*ma’kūl*). That is, the fodder which animals have eaten up and have trampled it with their feet till it perishes.

This is a brief commentary on this great surah in which Allah has explained what He did with the people of Elephant. He explained that their scheme failed badly. Similarly, everyone who intends to harm the truth shall have his schemes foiled. Allah protected Ka’bah from this elephant. However, towards the end of the times a man from Abyssinia shall be given control of it and he will raise it to the ground.[2] The story of the people of the Elephant occurred in background of the Prophetic mission of the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] which itself means exaltation of the House of Allah. As regards the Prophetic report about its destruction towards the end of times, that will happen as the guardians of this House, the Muslims, will disrespect the House and intend to commit heresy and polytheism in it disregarding its status. Allah will give them under the power of a person would fell the House and remove it from the face of the earth. This makes it incumbent upon the people of Makkah in particular to avoid minor and major sins. They should not desecrate Ka’bah so that they are not humbled in punishment for that. We beseech Allah to protect our religion and His House from all sorts of schemers. Indeed He has power over everything.

[1] Ibn Kathīr, al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah: 3:139.

[2] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 1595, 1596, Book of Hajj, Chapter: Destruction of Ka’bah.

Sūrah al-Quraysh: 106

Verses 1-5

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

This surah is thematically related to the previous surah, al-Fīl. The Surah that precedes it contains a mention of the blessing and favor of Allah upon the people of Makkah. He dealt with the people of the Elephant who had come with the intention to destroy Ka 'bah. In this Surah Allah has mentioned another favor upon the Makkans, the Quraysh; their *ilāf*, twice in the year, first in summer and the second in winter.

For the composing (*ilāf*) of Quraysh, their composing (*ilāfi him*) for the winter and summer caravan! The word *ilāf* signifies to combine, join and compose. It is a reference to the trade for which the Qur'aysh would travel once in summer and once in winter. During winter they would travel to Yemen to get the agricultural produce. The wealth would also be convenient. In winter they would travel to Syria for the majority trade in fruits and other items would be carried out during this time of the year. Besides, the weather would also be comparatively cooler. Thus it was one of the special blessings upon the Quraysh to make these two trade journeys convenient for them. Through this opportunity they would obtain great benefits.

Then Allah Almighty commanded them to worship the Lord of this House. He says: **So let them serve (*fa lya'budū*) the Lord of this House**, in order show gratitude to Him for this bounty. The particle F prefixing the verb can possibly be a particle denoting cause. The meaning would be: Due to these two journeys they should worship the Lord of this House. It can also be an F denoting corollary (*tafrīr*). In both the cases the F indicates that the command is based on the previous statement. Because of this great blessing, these people are obliged to worship Allah. '*Ibādah* (worship) means to humble oneself before Allah out of love and glorification. It means a man should serve Allah (*yata'abbad*), show humility before Him by listening to His commands and obeying them (unconditionally). Whenever a command of Allah and His Messenger reaches him, he should submit to it and say: I hear and I obey. When news told by them reaches him he should say: I hear and believe. This he should do with love for Allah and an acknowledgement of His glory.

Love for Allah is proven by following His commands. Due to Allah's exalted status one avoids committing a prohibition. This is because of the fear one has

for Allah. This is one of the aspects of *'ibādah*. The term *'ibādah* is also applied to the worships. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah shower His mercy upon him, has defined the term *'ibādah*, in this second sense, as follows: *'ibādah* is a noun which comprehensively covers everything that is liked by Allah and pleasing to Him. This includes sayings, actions; apparent and hidden.

The words of Allah Almighty: **Lord of this House**. The reference is to the glorious Ka'bah. Allah has attributed the House to Himself in the following verse: And purify My House for those that shall go about it and those that stand, for those that bow and prostrate themselves. (Q 22:26) In this verse (from Surah al-Quraysh) the Almighty has mentioned that He is the Lord of this House. He says: "**Lord of this House**." The Almighty has described that He is the Lord of the House to imply that the house is honorable and sacred. In His words (Surah al-Hajj) Allah has said: "And purify My House for those that shall go about it." Here Allah has attributed the House to Himself again in order to communicate that this house is honorable and sacred. Thus we learn that at one place Allah has mentioned that He is the Lord of the House and at the other place He attributed it to Himself. In both the cases the intention is to stress the honor and glory of the House.

In another verse Allah says: "I have only been commanded to serve the Lord of this territory which He has made sacred." (Q 27:91) Immediately after it Allah says: "to Him belongs everything." (Q 27:91) This last fact has been stated in order to remove the possibility that someone might think that Allah is the Lord of the City alone. Therefore, Allah explained "to Him belongs everything." For every different situation demands a different style of expression. Thus His words: "I have only been commanded to serve the Lord of this territory which He has made sacred" (Q 27:91) called for the explication that Allah's Lordship is general. It is not specific to the city. This was in place so that the polytheists could not claim that Allah is the Lord of the city alone. As for this place (al-Quraysh), the context demands only an explication of the high status of the House. Therefore, the statement has been confined to this fact alone (and no further clarification has been made).

Allah's saying: **who (*alladhī*) has fed them against hunger and secured them from fear**. The expression: *alladhī*, the one who. This is the attribute (*ṣifah*) of the world Lord. Therefore, grammatically it is in subjective mood (*naṣab*). This is why it is better to stop at: **So let them serve the Lord of this House**. After a pause you may continue reciting: "who has fed them." It is important to note because if you recite the words jointly the listener might believe that the word *alladhī* describes the House. This would be far away from soundness. This spoils the meaning.

By His words: “**who (*alladhī*) has fed them against hunger and secured them from fear,**” Allah explains His blessings upon the Quraysh; the apparent and the hidden blessings. Thus feeding them against hunger saves them from death and destruction. It is an internal blessing. This is a reference to the food they eat. The words “and secured them from fear” is refers to saving them from fear which is an external reality. The fear is always apparent. When a town is surrounded by the enemy and the dwellers fear them, they would not leave their homes. They world remained confined to their protective homes. Thus Allah has reminded them of this blessing and said: “**and secured them from fear.**” The safest and secured place on the earth is Makkah. This is why the trees in Makkah are not cut. The fodder in this land is not removed. Anything fallen on this land is not taken into custody. The preys in it are not hunted. One can’t shed blood in it. These are qualities exclusively found in Makkah. Even Madinah does not share this quality of Makah. Madinah itself has certain sanctities attached to it. However, the sacrednesses of Madinah are fall less than Makkah.

It is not possible that a Muslim enters Makkah for the first time without being in *iḥrām*. This is not true of Madinah. The fodder and vegetation of Makkah can’t be cut. It is *ḥarām* to do so. Contrarily, some trees in Madinah can be cut for the purpose of agriculture and other reasons. It is *ḥarām* to catch a prey in Makkah. If one does so he has to offer an animal in expiation. But the prey in Madinah is not necessarily expiated for. Thus the most secure place on the earth is Makkah. So much so the trees in it are religiously protected. The preys are protected. Were it not the case that Allah granted some lenience to humans the animals which are not preyed would also be made *ḥarām*. However, Allah has shown mercy to His servants and allowed them to slaughter animals in it. This blessing Allah has mentioned in the following saying: “Have they not seen that We have appointed a sanctuary secure, while all about them the people are snatched away?” (Q 29:67) The Almighty intends to say: Why don’t they thank God for this?

Therefore, this whole surah is a reminder to the Quraysh of the blessings of Allah due to this sacred and great House. They are also reminded of the divine blessings in the form of security from fear and feeding in hunger.

If someone asks: What is the obligation of the Quraysh concerning this blessing? Similarly, what is the obligation upon the settlers in Makkah from among the Quraysh and others?

We say: It is obligatory for them to be grateful to Allah by obeying Him, following His commands and avoiding to commit what He has prohibited. This is why we believe that when the sins are committed in Makkah in great

number the inhabitants of the city are in real danger as compared to the case of the dwellers of the other stations. Committing sin in a sacred and great place is graver than committing the same sin in an ordinary place. This is why Allah says: "And whosoever purposes to violate it wrongly, We shall let him taste a painful chastisement." (Q 22:25) Thus Allah Almighty threatens those who intend to violate it--not to say of committing this sinfulness--of grave punishment. One is obliged to remember the favours of the Almighty in every place not in Makkah only. Our country is the most secure country in the world today. All praise is due to Allah. It is the most opulent country in terms of sustenance and good life. Allah has fed us against hunger. He gave us peace and security from fear. Therefore, we are obliged to be grateful on this blessing. We should help each other on righteous acts and *taqwā*. We should command good and forbid evil. We must also call to Allah with understanding and steadfastness. We should be loving brothers.

When there is a difference among us, we, particularly the students among us, should sit together for discussion and peaceful debate and try to reach the truth. When the truth becomes apparent one should submit to it. A man must not depart the truth and support his personal view. None is a lawgiver and immune to error so that he can claim that his view is definitely sound and every other view is absurd. A believing man should try to become what Allah intends him to become. Allah says: "It is not for any believer, man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in the affair. Whosoever disobeys God and His Messenger has gone astray into manifest error." (Q 33:36) To stick to and insist on one's view even after the truth is apparent is wrong. It is falsehood. This is the practice of the polytheists who refused to follow the Messenger and said: "We indeed found our fathers upon a community, and we are following upon their traces." (Q 43:22).

We pray to Allah to give His blessing of Islam upon us permanently, let the peace and security in our countries abide, and make us loving brothers, following the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger. Indeed he has power to do everything.

Sūrah al-Ma‘ūn: 107

Verses 1-7

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Allah Almighty says: **Have you seen him who cries lies to the Doom (*bi al-dīn*)?** Is the address in “have you seen the one” directed to the Messenger upon whom the Qur’an was revealed? Or is it general towards every reader? The sounder view is that it is general. We hold that “have you seen the one” addresses every reader and it is general. **Have you seen him who cries lies to *al-dīn*?** That is, the final judgment. The reference is to the people who would reject resurrection and would say: “What, when we are dead and become dust and bones, shall we indeed be raised up? What, and our fathers, the ancients?” (Q 37:18-7) Some among them would say: “Who shall quicken the bones when they are decayed?” (Q 36:78) Thus these people would cry lies to the Day of Judgment. **That is he who repulses the orphan and urges not the feeding of the needy.** This rejecter has combined two evils in himself:

First, he is void of compassion for the orphans who deserve mercy. An orphan is someone whose father dies before he enters adult age. Such orphans deserve our mercy and compassion as they have lost their parents. Their hearts are broken and are in need of someone who can recollect them. This is why many religious rulings have been issues stressing the excellence of doing good to the orphans. However, this man, may Allah save us from developing this trait? “repulses (*yadu‘u*) the orphan”. He shoves the orphan off cruelly. The Arabic word *da‘* implies removing someone or something away harshly. Allah says: “The day when they shall be pitched into (*yud‘awna da‘ā*) the fire of Gehenna.” (Q 52:13) That is, they shall be fiercely and forcefully pushed to it. Thus you see that this man will send away and rebuke any orphan approaching him seeking something or talking to him on any matter. He deals with him with contempt and does not show mercy to him.

Secondly, he doesn’t even encourage and exhort others on showing compassion to the deserving. Allah says: **And urges not the feeding of the needy (*miskīn*).** *Miskīn* is the destitute in need of food. This man does not encourage others on feeding such needy people because his heart is hard as a stone as Allah says: “their hearts are like stones or even harder.” There is no mercy in him; neither for the orphans nor for the needy. He has a heart of stone.

Then Allah says: **So woe (wayl) to those that pray.** The word *wayl* expresses threat. It has been abundantly used in the Qur'an. The purpose of this word in this verse is to warn and threaten the people described. **And are heedless of their prayers.** These worshippers offer prayer with the rest of the believers or individually but they are "**heedless of their prayer.**" They are heedless. They don't offer it the way it should be offered. They defer it to the last moment and miss the time in which the prayer is most excellent. They don't offer the *rukū'* properly, nor the prostrations nor the standing postures nor the sitting postures. Nor do they fully recite the Qur'an and other sanctioned statements in the prayer as is obligatory. They enter the prayer heedless. Their hearts remains engaged in other activities. Such a man is ignorant of his prayer. It is condemnable. The man who deliberately ignores his prayer, remains heedless to it and takes it lightly is undoubtedly condemnable. As for the person who forgets, he is not condemnable. The difference is that the latter forgets to offer a prayer or some part of it. For example he forgets a *raka'ah* or any other obligatory part of the prayer. Such forgetfulness even occurred to the Prophet [pbuh] whose interest and engagement in the prayer was the best of all humans. He is reported to have said: "My comfort has been provided in prayer."^[1]

In spite of this he suffered forgetfulness in the prayer. To forget something means one just misses something for which he is not condemned. As for the person who is heedless in his prayer, he actually ignores it and takes it lightly. To be heedless to the prayer also includes abandoning the prayer with congregation. They undoubtedly avoid congregations deliberately and thus come under this threat: "**So woe to those that pray and are heedless of their prayers, to those who make display.**" Similarly, when they do some obedient act, it is not done sincerely. Rather they do it in order to be seen by the people. They intend to improve their worth in the society. They don't intend to draw near to Allah Almighty. Such an imposter gives in charity seeking that people declare him very gracious. He offers prayer so that the people may commend his prayer. All his actions are based on such mundane motives. These people show off. The essence of worship is that it is sincerely done for the sake of Allah. But they intend to bring praises of the people. Thus they intend to draw near to the people by doing things which are done to draw near to Allah. These are the men given to show off.

As for the people who offer to the people, in the sense that, for example, a man prostrates before a king or other person to submission and humility before him in prostration or bowing, such a man is a polytheist, disbeliever. Allah has declared '*jannah*' *haram* for him and his destination is Hell.

The person discussed in this Sūrah is a worshipper of Allah, even though he also considers the praise of humans. This is a common trait of the hypocrites. Allah says: “When they stand up to pray they stand up lazily, showing off to the people and not remembering God, save a little.” (Q 4:142) Consider this trait of the hypocrites: When they stand to pray they stand up lazily. This means that they are heedless to their prayers. They offer it to show off.

In this verse of Sūrah 107 Allah says: “**to those who make display.**” One may ask: Are those who would be heard the same as these? For example a man recites the Qur’an and recites it loudly in a beautiful manner so that he is praised for his beautiful recitation. Is this reciter the same as the person who offers prayer in order to be seen? Our response to this question is: Yes. *Aḥadīth* says: “If anyone wants to have his deeds widely publicized, Allah will publicize (his humiliation). And if anyone makes a hypocritical display (of his deeds) Allah will make a display of him.”[2] The implication is that the person who publicizes his deeds will be revealed. Allah will make people learn that this man is not sincere. He indeed wants that people hear him worship and praise him. Similarly, he who does something to be seen shall be exposed. The man, who shows off or makes people hear him remember Allah, shall soon be humiliated and people shall learn that he is an imposter. He seeks the immediate benefit of publicity and not the delayed reward to be offered on the Last Day.

And refuse charity. That is, they refuse to give others ordinary utensils. A man comes to them and asks to lend a utensil. He says: “I need a bucket. I need a drink pot so that I can drink water. I need a bulb.” This man refuses the favor. Therefore, he is condemned. The refusal of sharing such items with others at request is divided in two kinds:

First, that which incurs sin.

Second, that which does not incur sin but the person loses doing a great good.

A man incurs sin if he refuses to give what he is obliged to give. As for the one who refuses spending that which is not obligatory upon him, does not incur sin. However, he deprives himself of a great good. For example a needy man approaches him and says: “Give me water. If I don’t drink water I shall die.” If one does not hand him over his drink pot and water he shall be sinful. Some of the scholars even said: If this needy person dies the person refusing water shall be made to pay *diyāh* (blood money) because he caused his death. Therefore, one is obliged to spend at this head.

One should examine himself on this scale and consider if he has these characteristics. If these things are found in him then he should learn that he has wasted his ṣalāḥ and has been heedless to it. He has been refusing others any good he could do them. Such a man should repent and turn to Allah. Otherwise, he should learn that he is going to be subjected to the woe. May Allah protect us! If he is free from these evils then he should have the glad tidings. The purpose of the Qur'an is not that one should only recite it and worship Allah through this recitation. The objective of the Book is that we follow its teachings. 'Ā'ishah [rta] said: "The character (*khuluq*) of the Messenger of Allah was the Qur'an." [3] The word *khuluq* in the ḥadīth means moral character. He would follow the moral values from the Qur'an and embellish himself with them. May Allah grant us the ability to do what is good and reforming in the life of this world and the afterlife! He has the power to do everything.

[1] Reference to this ḥadīth has already passed: see page 242.

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 6499, Book of Softening of Hearts, Chapter: Showing off; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 2986 (47), Book of Zuhd, Chapter: Prohibition of Showing Off.

[3] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 746 (139), Book of Prayer of Travellers, Chapter: Night prayer, and the one who sleeps and misses it or is sick.

Sūrah al-Kauthar: 108

Verses 1-3

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

It has been held that this Sūrah is *Makki*. It has also been held that it is *Madani*. *Makki* Sūrahs are those Sūrahs which were revealed before the Prophetic migration to Madinah regardless of the place in which they were revealed, Makkah or Madinah or on the way during a journey. Every part of the Qur'an revealed after the Migration is *Madani*. Every part that was revealed before that time is called *Makki*. This is the preferred view from among the different views of the scholars. Allah Almighty addresses the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] and says: **Surely We have given you *al-kawthar*.**

The Arabic word *al-kawthar* means: abundant good. Truly the Almighty Allah granted the Prophet [pbuh] abundant good in this world and the next world. These blessings include the Great Canal in the Paradise which Allah has promised him. This is the canal from which two showers flow and fill the pond the Prophet [pbuh] has been promised. The water of this canal is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. "It gives an odour sweeter than musk." [1] This pond shall be there on the Last Day. During the stay on this day the believers from among the *ummah* of the Prophet [pbuh] shall come to it to drink. The pots used there would be as abundant and beautiful as the stars in the sky. [2] Those who would take a drink from the Sharī'ah of the Prophet [pbuh] in this world will be offered water from this pond. Those who fail to follow the Sharī'ah he brought shall be deprived of this drink on the last day.

The abundant good granted the Prophet [pbuh] in this world includes the following things narrated by Jābir [rta] and recorded in the Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim. The Prophet [pbuh] said: "I have been given five things which were not given to anyone else before me. -1. Allah made me victorious by awe, (by His frightening my enemies) for a distance of one month's journey. -2. The earth has been made for me (and for my followers) a place for praying and a source to perform *Tayammum*, therefore anyone of my followers can pray wherever the time of a prayer is due. -3. The booty has been made *Halal* (lawful) for me and it was not lawful for anyone else before me. -4. I have been given the right of intercession (on the Day of Resurrection). -5. Every Prophet used to be sent to his nation only but I have been sent to all mankind." [3]

This is some of the abundant good granted the Prophet [pbuh]. The Almighty sent him for the entire mankind. It means that his followers must outnumber the followers of the rest of the Prophets [pbut]. This is true. His followers are more in number. This is also an acknowledged fact that a man who leads others to good has a share in the good the guided people do and is like them. The person who guided this great *ummah* to good which the previous *ummahs* missed is none other than the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh]. Based on this the Messenger has a share in the good deeds of every man from among his *ummah*. Who can count the *ummah* except Allah?

Another good which Allah has granted the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] is that he shall be raised to the *maqām maḥmūd* (laudable station). Another such blessing is the Greatest Intercession. On the last day the people shall face unbearable pain and sorrow. They will seek intercession. They will first go to Adam [pbuh], then to Noah [pbuh], then to Ibrahim [pbuh], then to Moses [pbuh], and then to Jesus [pbuh] and [none of these Messengers will intercede for them]. Finally they will reach the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] who shall get up and intercede for them. Allah will judge the humans because of this intercession by the Prophet [pbuh].^[4] At this place the earlier and the latest generations of humans shall praise him. This is what is meant by the divine words: “Your Lord will raise you up to a laudable station.” (Q 17:79) Thus it is also one aspect of *al-kawthar*, that is, the abundant good.

Another form of the abundant good granted the Prophet [pbuh] is the canal in the Paradise. There is no doubt in that the canal in *al-jannah* is called *al-kawthar*. It is called by this name but it is not that *kawthar* signifies nothing but that canal. The good granted to the Prophet [pbuh] is not confined to it. After a mention of the blessings upon the Prophet [pbuh] through this abundant good Allah says:

So pray unto your Lord and sacrifice, in order to be grateful to Allah for this extraordinarily great blessing and good. The Prophet [pbuh] is commanded to offer the prayer and offer sacrifice for the sake of Allah. The *ṣalāh* being commanded here covers all forms of the prayer. The foremost of these prayer forms is the prayer which is accompanied by offering sacrifice; the prayer of Eid al-Aḍḥā. Yet the verse is general and covers all the rest of the prayers. “**So pray unto your**”, offer the obligatory and optional prayers as well as the Eid and the Friday prayers. **And sacrifice**. Draw near to your Lord by offering sacrifice. *Naḥr* is particularly used for slaughtering/hamstringing camels. Cow and goat etc. are slaughtered. But the Almighty has used the word *naḥr* here. This is because slaughtering a camel is better than other animals if we consider the number of the needy to benefit. This is why the Prophet of Allah slaughtered a hundred camels. He slaughtered sixty three of these by his own

hands. The rest he handed over to Ali [rta] to slaughter on his behalf. He gave away all parts of the offerings except for a part of each animal. He took it and made it; put in huge cauldrons. He cooked it and ate the meat and drank the gravy. He gave in charity - everything; even the remains and the hides.[5]

The command in this verse is issued to the Prophet [pbuh] and his *ummah*. We are therefore obliged to sincerely offer our prayers to Allah, and offer sacrifice exclusive for His sake just as the Prophet [pbuh] has been commanded. Then Allah says: **Surely he that hates you (*shāni'aka*), he is the one cut off (*al-abtar*).** This corresponds to the grant of the *kawthar*. Allah says: **Surely he that hates you (*shāni'aka*), he is the one cut off (*al-abtar*).** *Shāni'aka* means: the one that hates you. *Shan'ān* means: hatred. The following saying of Allah employs this term in this sense: Let not detestation (*shan'ān*) for a people who barred you from the Holy Mosque move you to commit aggression. (Q 5:2) That is, the hatred for these people should lead you to transgression. Elsewhere Allah says: "Let not detestation for a people move you not to be equitable." (Q 5:8) That is, hatred for them should not make you depart justice. Allah says: "be equitable -- that is nearer to god-fearing." Thus the words "***shāni'a ka***" in this verse of Sūrah al-Kawthar means: the one who hates you. **He is the one cut off (*al-abtar*).** The word *abtar* is *ism tafḍīl* (comparative degree) derived from the word *batr* which means: to cut. The implication is: He is the one cut off from every good. This has been said because the disbelievers from among the Quraysh would say: Muhammad is *abtar*. There is no good in him and no blessing. There is nothing good in following him. He is *abtar*. When the son of the Prophet [pbuh] al-Qāsim [rta] died they said: "Muhammad is *abtar*. He has no children. If he has some even then his race will not continue. (As all his surviving children are females." At this Allah explained that it is those who hate the Prophet [pbuh] who are *abtar* in the real sense. Such people are cut off from all good. There is nothing blessed in them. Their life is a cause of remorse for them.

If this is true of the people who hate the Prophet [pbuh] the same goes for the people who hate his Sharī'ah. Whoever hates the Sharī'ah of the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh], or dislikes a sign of the religion of Islam or dislikes any act through which Allah is worshipped in Islam, he is a disbeliever, and is out of the folds of Islam. This is based on the following saying of Allah Almighty: "That is because they have been averse to what God has sent down, so He has made their works to fail." (Q 47:9) So no religiously sanctioned practice is disliked but after disbelief. Whoever hates the obligation to offer ṣalāḥ he is a disbeliever even if he offers prayer. Whoever dislikes the obligation to pay zakāh is a disbeliever even if he pays the zakāh. However, the person who finds it hard to follow these rulings but does not hate them he has a characteristic of the hypocrites in him. However, he is not excommunicated.

There is a difference between the one who finds it hard to practice religious rulings and the one who hates them.

In the light of the above we can say that this Sūrah describes the blessings of Allah upon the Prophet [pbuh] as it tells that Allah has granted him *al-kawthar*. It also contains the command to be sincere in the prayer and sacrifice exclusively carrying out these practices for the sake of Allah. The same should be the ruling about the rest of the worships. It also explains that, the one who hates the Prophet [pbuh] or hates anything of the Sharī'ah he brought, is cut off; he has no good in him, nor any blessing. We ask Allah salvation and security.

[1] al-Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, No: 3361, Book of Tafsir, Chapter, What has been said concerning Sūrah al-Kawthar.

[2] *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim, No: 2300-2301, Book of Virtues, Chapter: Affirmation of the Ḥawḍ of our Prophet [pbuh] and its Characteristics.

[3] *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, No: 335, Book of Tayammum, Chapter: Divine saying: And (if) you did not find pure water then go for the pure soil; *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim, No: 1, 5 (3), Book of Ṣalāḥ, Chapter: Mosques and the Prayer Places.

[4] Reference has already passed: See page: 110.

[5] *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, No: 1718, Book of Hajj, Chapter: Giving in Charity the Hides of the Offerings; *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim, No: 1317 (348), Book of Hajj, Chapter: Charity through the Meat of the Offerings and their Remains.

Sūrah al-Kāfirūn: 109

Verses 1-6

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

This is one of the two *Sūrahs* which mainly discuss purity in belief. The first one is *Sūrah* “Say: 'O unbelievers (Q 109)” and the second such *Sūrah* is: “Say: 'He is God, One (Q 112).” The Prophet [pbuh] would recite these *sūrahs* in the Sunnah Raka‘ahs of the Fajr prayer[1] and the Sunnah Raka‘ahs of the Maghrib prayer.[2] He would also recite these two *Sūrahs* in the two raka‘ahs of Ṭawāf prayer.[3] These two *sūrahs* contain the theme of sincerity to Allah Almighty, His praise, and a mention of His perfect attributes contained in *Sūrah* “Say: 'He is God, One (Q 112).”

Say: 'O unbelievers. Allah calls out to and declares to them: “**O unbelievers.**” The address is directed to every disbeliever from among the polytheists, Jews, Christians, the communists and all others. Every disbeliever should necessary be called like this in your mind if he is not present and by your tongue if he is present so that you denounce him and his worship.

Say: 'O unbelievers, I serve not what you serve and you are not serving what I serve, nor am I serving what you have served, neither are you serving what I serve. The sentences have been repeated twice. **I serve not what you serve.** That is, I don't worship the entities you worship. And these are the idols. **You are not serving what (mā) I serve.** Reference is to Allah. The particle *mā* (literally: what) in this sentence has been used in the sense of *man*, who/whom. When *mā mawṣūlah* refers back to Allah it has to be taken in the sense of *man*, who/whom. The sentences “**I serve not what you serve and you are not serving what I serve**” mean: I don't worship your idols and you don't worship Allah. The sentences “**nor am I serving what you have served, neither are you serving what I serve**” may seem to be expressive of repetition brought in order to stress the point. However, it is not sound. The style of expression has been changed in the latter set of sentences. The words “**I serve not what you serve (lā a'budu mā ta'budū)**” employ verbs. The words *'ābid* and *'ābidūn* in the sentence *wa lā anā 'ābidun mā 'ābadtum* are nouns. If it were mere stress, the latter sentence would be exactly similar to the first one. The question arises: Why has this theme been repeated?

Some of the scholars have held: The sentence (**I serve not what you serve**) means: Presently I don't worship what you worship. They say that the words

“nor am I serving what you have served” mean: I am not going to worship in future what you worship. Thus the sentence “I serve not what you serve” expresses the negation of the act in present and the sentence “nor am I serving what you have served” means that this will not happen in future as well. The noun form *al-fā'il* signifies doing something in future. The reason is that it implies an act. The verbal noun does not express a verbal sense unless it has to be taken to imply future. So “I serve not what you serve” is restricted to the present. Similarly, the words “neither are you serving what I serve” negate the act in present. The sentences “nor am I serving what you have served, neither are you serving what I serve” imply worship in future.

However, an objection has been raised against this interpretation. How could it be said “neither are you serving (in future) what I serve” while some of the addressees later on believed and worshipped Allah? This takes us to the conclusion that the above mentioned interpretation suffers from a sort of weakness.

The scholars have explained away this objection. They say: In the sentence “neither are you serving (in future) what I serve” the Almighty Allah addresses only those of the disbelievers about whom He knew that they would not believe. Thus the address is not general in implication. This too has a sort of weakness in it.

Thus we have two views:

1. The repetition serves the purpose of stress on the theme.
2. The parts of the sentence refer to the future.
3. The third view is that the sentence: “I serve not what you serve” means: I don’t worship the idols which you worship. And the sentence “and you are not serving what I serve” means: You don’t worship Allah. “Nor am I serving what you have served, neither are you serving what I serve.” That is, my worship is not like your worship, nor is your worship like mine. This means that this negation relates to the act not the object. So what is being negated is the similarity of nature of and form of worship and the entity to be worshipped. Rather it is a negation of the worship and its form. It means: I don’t worship like you do and you don’t worship like I do. My worship is purely and exclusively dedicated to Allah and your worship involves polytheism.
4. Fourth view has been preferred by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah bless him.[4] According to this view the statement “I serve not what you serve and you are not serving what I serve” is a verbal sentence. Thus his view corresponds to the first view above particularly in these two sentences. The statement “nor am I serving what you have served, neither are you serving

what I serve” that is, in proceeding to this act. The meaning would be: I would not proceed to do anything or any form of worship other than my way of worship. I will not adopt the way you worship. Similarly, you would not also do that. Thus the first part refers to the act of worship. The latter part refers to embarking on the specific way of worship in future. It means: I will not be pleased with this. I don’t worship that way nor am I pleased with that. The same would be your case. You would not worship Allah nor would you accept and be pleased with his worship.

If you ponder over this view, you will see that it does not succumb to the objections we have already mentioned. Thus it is a sound and beautiful view. From this we learn and derive that there is no useless repetition in the Qur’an. Nothing has been mentioned in the Qur’an but has its benefit. Because if we hold: the Qur’an has useless repetition - this would mean that the Qur’an has redundant portions. However the Qur’an is free of such redundancy. In the light of this we say that the verse “And which of your Lord’s blessings shall you two reject” in Sūrah al-Raḥmān (Q 55) has been repeated for a great point of wisdom. The same is the case with the repeated occurrences of the verse “Woe to the rejecters for the day” in Sūrah al-Mursalāt. The deep signification in these refrains is that the verses falling between every two refrains refer to a number of great blessings of Allah. There is a verbal and formal benefit as well. The addressee who reads the verse “And which of your Lord’s blessings shall you two reject” and the verse “Woe to the rejecters for the day” is warned to the significance of the theme.

Then Allah says: **“To you your religion, and to me my religion.”** “To you your religion” that is, the one you are following and adhering to. “And to me my religion,” that is, I am not responsible for your religion and you are not responsible for my religion.

Some of the scholars have said: This Sūrah was revealed before the commandment to wage jihad was issued. A disbeliever can’t be allowed to follow his religion after the commandment of Jihad was issued. The only case he is let live is when he is one among the People of the Book and agrees to pay *jizyah*. According to the sounder view all the disbelievers can be allowed to pay *jizyah*.

The correct stance is that this Sūrah does not negate the ruling of Jihad so that we can say that this Sūrah has been repealed. Rather it is effective. We are obliged to denounce the religion of the Jews, the Christians and the polytheists all the time and circumstances. That is why we allow the Jews and the Christians follow their religion only when they pay *jizyah*. We worship Allah. They worship what they like. So this Sūrah contains denouncement of

and separation from worship of other than Allah, regardless of the matter, it is the form of the worship or the person worshipped. This Sūrah teaches sincerity in worship of Allah. It commands us not to worship any entity other than Allah. He has no partner. At this point the commentary on this Sūrah concludes.

[1] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 726 (98), Book of Prayer of the Traveller, Chapter: It is desirable to offer two Raka'ah Sunnah in Fajr prayer and explication of what is desirable to be recited in them.

[2] Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, No: 431, Book of Salah, Chapter: What has been said about the two Raka'ahs of Maghrib Prayer and Recitation in it; Sunan of Ibn Mājjah, No: 1166, Chapters on Establishing the Salah, Chapter: What is recited in the two Raka'ahs of the Sunnah prayer offered after al-Maghrib.

[3] Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 1218 (147), Book of Hajj, Chapter: Hajj of the Prophet [pbuh].

[4] Majmū' Fatāwā of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, (collected by al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Qāsim) 16/535.

Sūrah al-Naṣr: 110

Verses 1-3

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

When comes the help of God (*naṣr Allah*), and victory. This Sūrah addresses the Prophet [pbuh]. **Naṣr Allah.** The word *al-Naṣr* means: making a man overpower his enemy so that he dominates him, humiliates him and makes him follow his wishes. The *naṣr* (victory) is the greatest pleasure a servant of Allah gains in his actions. The person who receives succour and obtains victory, finds a great exultation and abounding ecstasy. However, if one is victorious in a struggle based on the truth then it is better. It has been reported in the sound Ḥadīths that the Prophet [pbuh] said: “Allah made me victorious by awe (of frightening my enemies) for a distance of one month's journey.”[1] That is, the enemy of the Prophet [pbuh] would fear him even if the two were separated by a distance to be covered in a month. This awe and fear is the strongest deterrent from an enemy. The person who is struck by fear is unable to remain steadfast. Rather he flies away like a bird.

Thus the words of the Almighty “**When comes the help of God (*naṣr Allah*)” mean: When Allah helps you against your enemy. **And victory.** The word *fath* (victory) is a *ma'tūf* (conjugated with) the word *al-naṣr*. *Fath*(victory) has been conjugated with *al-Naṣr* even though the latter itself implies the former. Thus it is to conjugate a particular (*khāṣṣ*) with a general (*āmm*). An example of such conjugation is found in the following saying of Allah Almighty: “In it the angels and the Spirit descend.” (Q Q 97:4) That is, in the Night of Power the angels and Jibrīl descend. We know that Jibrīl is also an angle. He has been particularly mentioned due to his special status among the class. The definitive article AL (the) prefacing the word *fath* denotes the victory known to you. Reference is to the conquest of Makkah. Conquest of Makkah happened in the month of Ramadan 8AH. The Prophet [pbuh] had entered into a treaty with the Quraysh in 7AH. It was during the incident of Hudaibiyah. The Quraysh violated the terms of the treaty and went back on their word. The Prophet [pbuh] intended to fight them. He left Madinah for Makkah with about ten thousand fighters. He left secretly. He prayed to Allah and said: “O Allah keep our news from them!”[2] So they could not learn about it until the Prophet [pbuh] covered them from all sides. He entered Makkah on the 20th of Ramadan in the year 8AH, as successful and victorious.**

The leaders of the Quraysh gathered around him about the Ka'bah. The Prophet [pbuh] stood on the door of the Ka'bah and the Quraysh under him waiting what would he decide about them. He held the two pillars of the door and said: "O People of the Quraysh, what do you believe I am going to do with you?" It was a question from a person who was forced to leave Makkah just eight years ago. But now they were in his grip and he could do with them what he liked. He asked them: "what do you believe I am going to do with you?" They replied: "(You are) an honourable brother and son of an honourable brother." The Prophet [pbuh] declared: "I say to you what Yūsuf [pbuh] said to his bothers: "No reproach this day shall be on you." (Q 12:92). Go you are free." [3]

Thus the Prophet [pbuh] forgave them. This Conquest has been termed "Open Victory" by Allah. Allah Almighty says: "Surely We have given thee a manifest victory." (Q 48:1) That is, a clear, great and manifest victory. As the events turned out like this the people knew that the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh] would be victorious. They knew that the mansions of the Quraysh and their followers were now the things of the past. Thus the people "**men started entering God's religion in throngs.**" That is, in multitudes. Previously the people were accepting Islam one by one. It was only occasionally that some people would embrace Islam and that too secretly. But now they started entering Islam in multitudes. The people would come to the Prophet [pbuh] in Madinah in form of large delegations. They thronged him from all sides. This is why the year 9AH was called the Year of Delegates.

Allah Almighty says: When you see this happening "**then proclaim the praise of thy Lord and seek His forgiveness.**" One expects that it the response would be: Praise Allah, be thankful to Him for this great blessing and glorify Him. But Allah says: "**then proclaim the praise of thy Lord and seek His forgiveness.**" This corresponds to the following saying of Allah: "Surely We have sent down the Qur'an on you, a sending down; so be patient under the judgment of your Lord." (76:23-4) The expected command would be: Be thankful to Allah on this revelation and fulfil its rights. Instead Allah says: "so be patient under the judgment of your Lord." This is in order to indicate that the Prophet [pbuh] would be soon subjected to torture due to his preaching and propagation of this Qur'an.

Then proclaim the praise of thy Lord and seek His forgiveness. A little ponder over this reveals the wisdom. The implication is: When the help of God and victory comes, that would indicate your time is near. So you are only obliged to glorify Allah and seeking His forgiveness. **Then proclaim the praise of thy Lord.** That is glorify Him along with singing His praises. *Tasbīḥ* implies declared Allah pure of anything that does not match His exalted status. *Ḥamd* is to

praise Allah with perfect love and reverence for Him. Thus the Prophet [pbuh] has been commanded to combine the glorification and praise. **And seek His forgiveness.** That is, beseech Him to forgive you. Thus Allah has commanded the Prophet [pbuh] to undertake two things:

First, glorification accompanied by praises for Him.

Second, seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*). *Istighfār* implies seeking forgiveness (*maghfirah*). *Maghfirah* means that Allah covers the sins of His servants, removes them and forgives them. This is the best thing a man can ever win. A man is subject to sinfulness. So he needs forgiveness. If Allah does not cover him with His mercy he would certainly meet destruction. This is why Allah's Messenger [pbuh] said: "None among you shall enter Paradise merely on the basis of his actions." The Companions [rta] asked: "Even you, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied: "Neither, I unless Allah covers me in His mercy." [4] This principle is based on the fact that if you compare your deeds with the blessings of Allah, rather a single blessing, it would be outweighed by the blessings. How can then your deeds work as an exchange for Paradise? This is why some of the people of insight said:

If my expression of gratitude to Allah is due to another blessing of Allah upon me which in turn merits to be thanked for, how can one thank Allah unless He blesses us? So one can't thank Allah as is due even if the days grow longer, the age prolonged and one continues praising Allah for the whole life.

For He turns again unto men (*inna hū kāna tawwābā*). That is, Allah always turns to His servants. When you seek His forgiveness He relents towards you. This is the meaning of the Sūrah.

However, there is another theme running in the Sūrah that can't be discovered except by the very pure men. One Umar [rta] heard that the people were criticising him for keeping Ibn 'Abbās [rta] close to him even though he was a young man. 'Umar [rta] would not keep other young men of that age near to him. 'Umar [rta] was the most just caliphs. He intended to show to the people that he did not love Ibn 'Abbās [rta] without any reason. He gathered the elders among the Emigrants and the Helpers one day. Ibn 'Abbās [rta] was also there. Umar [rta] asked them: What do you say about the meaning of the Sūrah, "When comes the help of Allah and the Conquest." He recited the entire Sūrah. They all explained it in a way that only covered the apparent meaning of the text of the Sūrah. Some of them said: Allah commands us to praise Him and seek His forgiveness when we are helped and granted victory. Some said: We don't know. Some even kept complete silence. At this Umar [rta] asked Ibn 'Abbās [rta]: What do you say on this? He replied: O Chief of the

believers, (in this Sūrah) Allah alludes to the death of the Prophet [pbuh]. He says: When the help of Allah reaches you and you are granted victory, that is the Conquest of Makkah, then you should learn that it is an indication of the fact that your end is drawing near. **And you see men entering God's religion in throngs. Then proclaim the praise of your Lord, and seek His forgiveness; for He turns again unto men.** At this ‘Umar [rta] said: By Allah, I know nothing more of this Sūrah than that you know.[5] Thus this way the excellence of Ibn ‘Abbās [rta] was revealed to the people. It became clear that he was a genius and had knowledge of the intended meaning of the Sūrah.

When this Sūrah was revealed the Prophet [pbuh] engaged more and more in Allah’s worship. He would be the best in those dedicated to worship. He would fear Allah more than anyone. He would often repeat the following glorifications in his ruku’s and prostrations: “Pure are You, Our Lord. All praises are for you. O Allah forgive us our sins and our transgressions. Make us steadfast and grant us victory against the disbelievers.”[6]

[1] The reference to this Ḥadīth has already passed. See page 332.

[2] Mu‘jam al-Kabīr of al-Ṭabarānī, 23/1052, and Mu‘jam al-Ṣaghīr of al-Ṭabarānī 68.

[3] The reference to this Ḥadīth has already passed. See page 155.

[4] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 6463, Book of Softening of Hearts, Chapter: Intention of and Permanence in Doing Deeds; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, 2816 (72), Book of Characteristics of Hypocrites, Chapter: None shall enter Jannah due to his actions but with the mercy of Allah.

[5] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 4294, Book of Battles, Chapter: 52.

[6] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 4968, Book of Tafsīr, Chapter: His saying: When help of Allah comes; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 484 (217), Book of Prayer, Chapter: What is said in Ruku’s and Prostrations.

Sūrah al-Masad: 111

Verses 1-5

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

This Qur'an contains many arguments which clearly and explicitly establish that the Prophet [pbuh] is true. He does not call others (to the religion) in order to win fame and rule. Nor does he intend to win the leadership of his nation. The uncles of the Prophet [pbuh] were divided on the question of the Prophet [pbuh] and how to respond to his Lord. They were three groups:

- a) A group that believed in him and submitted to the Lord of the worlds.
- b) The party that helped the Prophet [pbuh] but did not embrace Islam.
- c) The party that became his enemy, opposed him and persisted in disbelief.

The first group included al-'Abbās b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib [rta], and Ḥamzah b. 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib [rta]. The second of the two was the most excellent among the martyrs in the sight of Allah. The Prophet [pbuh] described him as the lion of Allah and His Messenger [pbuh].[1] He was martyred on the Day of Uḥd during the second year after Hijrah.[2]

Abu Ṭālib was the one of the uncles of the Prophet [pbuh] who helped him but persisted in disbelief. He protected the Prophet [pbuh] and helped him in every possible way. However, he was subject to the divine decree about him concerning the punishment. He did not embrace Islam till his last breath. When he was about to depart the world, the Prophet [pbuh] asked him to embrace Islam. He refused and died on what he called "*millah* of 'Abd Al-Muttalib." [3] The Prophet [pbuh] interceded for him. However, he will still be in shallow fire. He will be wearing two shoes due to heat of which his brain shall be boiling.[4]

As for the third group of his uncles which opposed him, it included his uncle Abu Lahb. Allah has revealed a whole Sūrah concerning him which is recited by Muslims in their obligatory and supererogatory prayers, openly and privately. A man is rewarded for reciting it. Every letter one recites earns one ten rewards.

Allah says: "**Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he!**" This is a condemnation of Abu Lahab who behaved harshly when the Prophet [pbuh] gathered his relatives in order to call them to Allah. He gave them glad tidings

and issued warnings. At this Abu Lahab said: “May you be perish! Did you call and gather us for this?”[5] His saying: “Did you gather us for this?” is an expression of contempt. He meant to say that it is insignificant matter which does not merit such attention that the leaders are gathered to hear about it. This is similar to the following saying of the rejecters quoted in the Qur’an: “Ha, is this the one who makes mention of your gods?” (Q 21:36) It also expresses contempt for the Prophet [pbuh]. They mean to say that he is nothing. He does not merit consideration. The rejecters also said: “They say, 'Why was this Qur’an not sent down upon some man of moment in the two cities?’” (Q 43:31)

To sum up, Abu Lahab said: Woe to you! Did you gather us for this? So Allah responded to him in this Sūrah and said: “**Perish (*tabbat*) the hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he (*tabba*)!**” The verb *tabba* is derived from *tabāb* which means: loss and destruction. Allah says: “And Pharaoh's guile came only to ruin (*tabāb*).” (Q 40:37) *Tabāb*, that is, loss. Allah Almighty has mentioned the hands of Abu Lahab before his person because hands are the tool of action and movement, taking and giving and other such acts. The surname Abu Lahab fully and appropriately describes his status at that time as well as his final destination. The correspondence between this surname and realities about him is that the man shall soon be put on very hot fire. It will be issuing great flames as required by his circumstances and his destination. A poet says:

When your eyes spot a person going with a surname note that-- if you ponder over his surname -- you will find that it has a meaning.

When Suhayl b. ‘Amr came to the Muslims before the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah was signed, the Prophet [pbuh] said: “This is Suhayl b. ‘Amr. I believe that he has made your matter easy for you (*sahhala lakum amrakum*).”[6] The noun corresponds to the action.

Allah says: **His wealth avails him not (*mā aghnā ‘an hu mālu hū*)**. The particle *mā* inaugurating the sentence can be used for interrogation. It would therefore mean: What of his wealth and earning has availed him? The response would be: Nothing. It is also possible that it implies a negation. The meaning would be: His wealth and his earning did not avail him anything. Both the meanings necessarily imply each other. The meaning in both the senses is: His wealth and earning has not availed him anything. This is in spite of the fact that generally wealth is useful. If a man is taken over by his enemies he can free himself by spending wealth. He says: I give you this money if you let me free. The enemy thus frees him. The enemy may demand a great or relatively little wealth. If a man gets ill he uses his wealth for his

benefit. When he is hungry his wealth avails him. Thus wealth is generally useful. However, it cannot release from Hell. In this sense it has no use.

This is why Allah says: **His wealth avails him not.** That is, it does not help him against Allah. His words: **And what he has earned.** It has been held that it means: The children he has got. It is as if Allah says: His wealth and children did not avail him. It is similar to the statement of Noah [pbuh]: “And followed him whose wealth and children increase him only in loss.” (Q 71:21) Thus this group of scholars took the words “and what he earned” to mean: his children. They sought corroboration of their view from the following saying of the Prophet [pbuh]: ““The best of your provision is what you earn, and your children are part of what you earn.”[7]

The sound view is that the verse has a more general meaning. The verse covers children as well as the wealth that he earned but is no more in his hands. It also covers the status and power he gained. Everything he earned that adds to his respect, honour and power shall never avail him anything. **His wealth avails him not, neither what he has earned.**

He shall roast at a flaming fire (sa yaşlā). The particle S prefixing the verb *yaşlā* has been used to add the sense that it will really happen and happen soon. Allah has threatened him that he shall soon be put in a flaming fire. However, his wealth in this world and the life prolongs, still the hereafter is near. The people in Barzakh may lie there for long time yet they are almost going through the judgment. Allah says: “It shall be as if on the day they see that they are promised, they had not tarried but for an hour of a single day. A Message to be delivered! And shall any be destroyed but the people of the ungodly?” (Q 46:35) A small portion of the day time is indeed short.

And his wife, the carrier of the firewood. That is, the same shall be the fate of his wife. His wife was one of the nobles of the Quraysh. Her nobility and honour shall not avail her anything. This is because she was a partner with her husband in showing enmity to the Prophet and sinfulness. She remained persistent in her disbelief. The divine word **ḥammālata in: the carrier of the firewood (ḥammālata)** has been read two ways: **ḥammālata** and **ḥammālatu**. In the first form it is the *ḥāll* (adverb) of the word *imra’ati hī*. That is, and his wife who would be carrying firewood. It may also be in the accusative as an expression of condemnation. A *ṣifah* can be put in the accusative for such condemnation. The meaning would be: I condemn the firewood carrier. As for the reading **ḥammālatu** that is simply a *ṣifah* of the word *imra’ah*.

The word **ḥammālatu** is the form expressive of stress and exaggeration. The meaning is: the one who carries firewood very much. It has been reported that

she would carry wood in which there were thorns and put them in the path of the Prophet [pbuh] so that he is harmed by it.

Upon her neck (*jīd*) a rope (*ḥabl*) of palm-fibre (*masad*). *Al-jīd* means: neck. *ḥabl* is a well known term. *masad* means: palm-fibre. The meaning is: She is wearing a rope of palm-fibre when she goes out to the desert so that she can get the wood and bind it with it. This wood she carries to put in the path of the Prophet [pbuh]. May Allah save us from any such evil! This statement also refers to that she was lowly and had degraded herself. She was the wife of a leader of the Quraysh. Still she would go out to the desert carrying this rope in her neck. However, in order to torture the Prophet [pbuh] she would go to that extent. May Allah protect us! At this the commentary on this Sūrah concludes.

[1] Al-Bukhārī, Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr, 8:438; Ibn Abū ‘Aṣim, al-Jihad, p. 249.

[2] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 4072, Book of Battles, Chapter: Martyrdom of Hamzah b. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalīb, rta.

[3] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 4772, Book of Tafsīr, Chapter: You don’t guide the one you like; Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim, No: 24 (39), Book of Faith, Chapter: Evidence that the islam of one who becomes muslim on his deathbed is valid; and Evidence that one who dies an idolator is one of the people of hell.

[4] Reference to this hadith has already passed. See page 204.

[5] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 4973, Book of Tafsīr, Chapter: The Noble verse: He shall roast at a flaming fire.

[6] Ṣaḥīḥ of al-Bukhārī, No: 2731, Book of Conditions, Chapter: Conditions of Jihad.

[7] Jāmi ‘ al-Tirmidhī, No: 1358, Book of Rulings, Chapter: What has been said on that the child gets the wealth of his father.

Sūrah al-Falaq: 113

Verses 1-5

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak (*falaq*). The lord of *falaq* is Allah. *al-Falaq* is daybreak. It is also possible that it is more general in application and covers everything that Allah brings out by piercing another thing including morning, grains and seeds. Elsewhere Allah says: “It is God who splits the grain and the date-stone (*fāliq al-ḥabbi wa al-nawā*).” (Q 6:95) He also says: “He splits the sky into dawn (*fāliq al-iṣbāḥ*).” (Q 6:96)

From the evil of what He has created. That is, from the evil of all the created things. The creations of Allah include human self (*nafs*). The *nafs* is attracted to evil. Thus when we say “from the evil of what He has created” the first thing we have in mind is our *nafs*. This has expressly mentioned in the sermon: We seek Allah’s refuge from the evil of our *nafs*.^[1] The divine words: “from the evil of what He has created” also covers the Satans from among the jinn and the humans and other forms.

From the evil of darkness (*ghāsiq*) when it gathers. The word *ghāsiq* has been interpreted to mean night. Another view is that it refers to the moon. The soundest approach is that it is a general term covering these two and other things. It covers night because Allah has said: “Perform the prayer at the sinking of the sun to the darkening of the night (*ghasaq al-layl*).” (Q 17:78) Dangerous beasts and spirits are often rampant during the night time. This is why we have been taught to seek Allah’s refuge from the evils of *ghāsiq*, that is, night. The moon also comes under the implication because in one Prophetic Ḥadīth it has been said that the Prophet [pbuh] made ‘Ā’ishah [rta] see the moon and then said: “This is the *ghāsiq*.”^[2] The moon is *ghāsiq* because it rules during the night.

The noble verse “**from the evil of darkness (*ghāsiq*) when it gathers (*idhā waqaba*)**” is conjugated with “**From the evil of what He has created.**” This is the conjugation of a particular with the general. *Ghāsiq* is included in the creations of Allah. The words “*idhā waqaba*” mean: When it enters. When the night extends its darkness it becomes *ghāsiq*. When the Moon spreads its light it becomes *ghāsiq*. Both these processes occur during the night.

From the evil of the women who blow on knots (*al-naffāthāt fi al-‘uqad*). *Al-naffāthāt fi al-‘uqad* refers to the women who cast spell. They tie knots on the threads etc. Then they recite some chants containing names of Satans etc and blow on the knot. They do this with each knot they tie; chanting magical spells and blowing. These women are evil in their nature. They intend to target a specific man. Then their magic affects the person they cast their spell on. Allah has particularly mentioned the women who cast such spells and blow on knots and have not mentioned such men because women make the majority of such evil humans. This is why Allah says: “*al-naffāthāt fi al-‘uqad*.” Another possibility is that the actual construction is “*anfus al-naffāthāt*, the *naffāthāt* souls, which covers men as well as women.

From the evil of an envier (*ḥāsīd*) when he envies. The word *ḥāsīd* refers to the person who hates that any other person is blessed by Allah. You find that such a person shrinks by meters when he sees that a certain man has been blessed by Allah through wealth, power, respect, knowledge or any way. He becomes jealous. However, there are two types of jealous people. First, the kind who are jealous in their heart and dislike that another person is blessed by Allah but they don’t proceed to harm the person blessed by Allah. Such men remain aggrieved and sad seeing others being blessed. But they don’t transgress against the blessed men. The evil strikes the jealous when he feels jealousy. This is why Allah has said: **When he envies.** Another type of jealousy is that of the person who has an evil eye. The person with an evil eye strikes another person whom he dislikes due to God’s blessings the latter enjoys. When he feels that Allah has blessed a certain person his evil *nafs* issues something that we can’t describe as it is unknown and that thing strikes the target. The victim may die, or get ill or grow mad. Such a jealous person at times strikes iron and makes it useless. It may also hit a car with his evil eye and break it in pieces or leave it dysfunctional. It may strike tubewells and the tractors. Thus the evil is true. It strikes with the permission of Allah Almighty.

Allah has mentioned “darkness (*ghāsiq*) when it gathers (*idhā waqaba*),” “women who blow on knots (*al-naffāthāt fi al-‘uqad*)” and “an envier (*ḥāsīd*) when he envies” because the evil issues from these entities in such hidden circumstances. The night is covering and screen. Allah says: “By the night enshrouding).” (Q 92:1) It is possible to harm someone during night without being noticed. “**Women who blow on knots (*al-naffāthāt fi al-‘uqad*).**” This is also because magic and spells are secret affairs. Similarly, “**an envier (*ḥāsīd*) when he envies.**” The person with evil eye strikes stealthily. He strikes the person who believes that the man is the most beloved of all to him and vice versa. Even then he strikes. This is why Allah has related these three evils with three particular circumstances: “darkness (*ghāsiq*) when it gathers (*idhā waqaba*),” “women who blow on knots (*al-naffāthāt fi al-‘uqad*)” and “an envier

(ḥāsīd) when he envies.” Otherwise, all these acts were covered by the first verse “from the evil of everything Allah created.”

If it is asked: How can one escape these three evils? Our response to this question follows: A man can remain secure from these evils by developing a strong relation with Allah Almighty. One should hand one’s affairs over to Allah. He should truly rely on his Lord. He should also use the supplications Sharī’ah has taught seeking safety from these evils. In the recent times the magic practitioners and jealous people with evil eye have increased and people have been inflicted more by them. This is only because of their detachment from Allah Almighty. Their reliance on Allah has decreased. They seldom use the Sharī’ah supplications for the purpose. Otherwise we know the supplications Sharī’ah taught are sure forts and safety walls against such evils. They are stronger than the barrier wall of God and Magog. Unfortunately many people don’t know these supplications. Those who know seldom use them. Those who recite them do so with absent mind. All these are shortcomings. Had people used these supplications taught by the Sharī’ah they would have remained safe from many evils. We beseech Allah to protect us and keep us save.

[1] Musnad of Imam Ahmad, 1/302.

[2] Jāmi’ al-Tirmidhī, No: 3366, Book of Tafsīr, Chapter: Surahs *al-Mu’awwadhatayn*.

Sūrah al-Nās: 114

Verses 1-6

In the Name of God; the Merciful, the Compassionate.

The *basmalah* has already been explained.

Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of men. The Lord of men is Allah Almighty. He is the Lord of men as well as other creations; Lord of men, Lord of angels, Lord of jinn, Lord of the Heavens, Lord of the earth, Lord of the sun, Lord of the moon; He is the Lord of everything. It is only due to the addressees that only men have been mentioned.

The King of men. That is, He is the King who has the highest degree of rule and power on men. It is Allah whose authority is perfect. **The God of men.** That is, their loved one and their god. The real god whom one whom one loves from the heart and takes as a deity is Allah Almighty.

From the evil of the slinking (*al-khannās*) whisperer (*al-waswās*) who whispers in the breasts of men of jinn and men. *al-waswās*. The scholars have said: The word *al-waswās* is a verbal noun which is used in the stead of active participle (*ism al-fā'il*). The meaning is: The whisperer, *Waswasah* means baseless thoughts and doubts put in one's mind. ***al-khannās*.** The one who turns away when we invoke Allah's name. The reference is to Satan. We know that he runs away when a call to prayer is made. He runs away while farting. He runs in order not to listen to the declarations of faith. When the call to prayer ends he returns. When the call for congregation (*iqāmah*) is made he runs away once more. When it is finished, he comes back and whispers in the minds of the worshippers. He whispers to the worshipper: Remember this or that. Thus he reminds the person of the matter which he did not have in mind and thus the person doesn't know where he is.[1] In is in this context it has been said in a relic: When Satans (*ghilān*) flock quickly proceed to make an *adhan*. [2] *Ghilān* are Satans who assume forms like spirits and appear to the traveler. They may also look as enemy and other things. If the person experiencing this declares *takbīr* these evils run away.

Of jinn and men. That is, the whisperer can belong to Jinn and humans. As for the whispering by jinn it is obvious. Satan runs through man's *nafs* of a man like blood. As for the whispering by humans, that too is possible. Many people approach a man, put evil in his mind and make it appealing to his heart so that he takes this suggestion and follows it.

When the Prophet [pbuh] would go to bed he would recite these three surahs, *al-Ikhlās*, *al-Falaq*, *al-Nās* and blow on his hand and then wipe his face and other parts of his body in the reach of his hands.[3] Sometimes he would recite them after the five daily prayers.[4] A man should strive to follow the sunnah in this regard and recite these surahs at the proper occasion as marked by the practice of the Prophet [pbuh]. At this we conclude our commentary on the thirtieth part of the Qur'an, *al-Naba'*. Allah Almighty knows best. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh], his followers, family and Companions [rta].

[1] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 608, Book of Adhān, Chapter: Excellence of Adhān; Sahih of Muslim, No: 389 (83), Book of Salah, Chapter: Excellence of Adhan and Running of Satan after hearing it.

[2] Musnad of Imam Ahmad, No: 14277.

[3] Sahih of al-Bukhari, No: 5017, Book of Virtues of the Qur'an, Chapter: Excellence of the Mu'awwadhatayn.

[4] Sunah of Abu Dāwūd, No: 1523, Book of Witr, Chapter: Seeking Forgiveness; Sunan of al-Nisā'ī, No: 1337, Book of Forgetfulness, Chapter: Command to Recite the Mu'awwadhatayn after Taslīm; al-Mustadrak of al-Ḥākim, 1/253.

Appendix

Abū az-Zubayr Harrison has also translated parts of Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn’s tafsīr. The links to these can be found below:

Sūrah al-Fātiḥah (1):

http://www.authentic-translations.com/trans-pub/at_misau_2.pdf

Sūrah al-Naba (78):

http://www.authentic-translations.com/trans-pub/at_misau_3.pdf

Sūrah al-Nāzi`āt (79):

http://www.authentic-translations.com/trans-pub/at_misau_4.pdf

Sūrah al-Takwīr (81):

http://www.authentic-translations.com/trans-pub/at_misau_18.pdf

Sūrah al-Infiṭār (82):

http://www.authentic-translations.com/trans-pub/at_misau_22.pdf

Surah al-Inshiqāq (84):

http://www.authentic-translations.com/trans-pub/at_misau_19.pdf

Sūrah al-Takāthur (102):

http://www.authentic-translations.com/trans-pub/at_misau_23.pdf